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The West holds its breath as Poland changes direction

DIE ZEIT

The Polish metamorphosis is proceeding at a breathtaking pace. Who would have thought, early this summer, that Poland would have a non-Communist Prime Minister before the summer holidays were over?

Who would have thought that the Communists would not only have to share power with Solidarity, the workers' Opposition, but would, to a large extent, have to hand it over?

And who would have thought that the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw would publicly welcome this dramatic development instead of calling in the tanks from the western military regions of the Soviet Union?

The world looks on with bated breath, and not without reason. Reformations can easily trigger counter-reformations. Empires are given to striking back, even if only out of weakness.

The advocates of perestroika may repeatedly reassure all and sundry that the Brezhnev Doctrine of old, justifying armed intervention whenever an oppressed nation in Eastern Europe rebelled against pressure to toe the Kremlin's ideological line or against Soviet imperial interests, has been abandoned.

But no-one knows for sure just where the borderline now lies between the Soviet pain threshold and the limit to tolerance. Maybe not even Mikhail Gorbachov himself knows for sure.

Final, reliable proof has yet to be provided that the Cold War is over.

It began when Stalin forced the countries of Eastern Europe to toe the Soviet line. It will be over when Stalin's successors allow oppressed nations in the region to shake off the yoke to which they have had to submit since the Second World War: the yoke of Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist ideology.

The decline of communism coincides with the dissolution of Moscow's outer imperial sphere. What makes the change in Poland so revolutionary — and so important — is that Warsaw has broken with both communist one-party dictatorship and total Soviet hegemony.

Sceptical anxiety as to whether this historical process will succeed is entirely justified, yet there is no need for us to cry wolf. Never have the prospects of freeing Eastern Europe from the bonds of Red dictatorship between better in the past 40 years than they are today.

"The victory of international communist revolution is assured," Lenin proudly proclaimed. It is a claim that can now raise no more than a wry smile.

Marxist ideology is dead, sullied by the crimes of its custodians, distorted by all societal forces dying off (as opposed to the state withering and dying, as forecast by Karl Marx), and discredited by the failure of its economic nostrums.

It has long ceased to be the bond and sealant of a multinational community. It would be better described as an explosive.

Its inadequacies give rise to all manner of different proposals to remedy the situation. Religious inspiration is no longer triggered by a cathedral of which the masonry is crumbling.

The failure of the great socialist experiments is plain for all to see, in political, economic and philosophical terms alike.

Marx wanted a better society, a society more concerned with human dignity; his noble idea became a pretext for mass oppression.

His disciples banked on the power of common sense, but they were overpowered by a sombre urge for power.

They promised heaven on earth yet transformed the countries of Eastern Europe into poorhouses. Under the banner of justice they set up the rule of absolute injustice. Small wonder that communism today is deep in the throes of a crisis. It is best described in the classic Leninist terms by which Communists used to describe the general crisis of capitalism. If, for instance the term "capitalism" is replaced by "socialism" and "imperialism" by "communism" or "the Soviet Union," the 1961 programme of the Soviet Communist Party will be found to describe the current condition of international communism in a manner that couldn't be apter or more devastating:

"Communism has entered into a period of decline and fall. From top to bottom it is beset by an inevitable process of decomposition extending to its economic and constitutional order, to its politics and ideology.

"Communism has forfeited irrevocably its sway over the greater part of mankind . . . More and more countries are abandoning it as its position in economic competition with free market economies grows weaker.

"The communist colonial system is disintegrating. Contradictions are intensified as state monopoly communism develops and militarism gains ground.

"The internal instability and decay of the socialist economy (slow growth in production, periodic crises, constant underutilisation of productive capacity, chronic unemployment) are on the increase.

"Political reaction is heightened as never before in all sectors. Civil liberties are being suspended and fascist tyrannies set up in a number of countries. The politics and ideology of the Communists are undergoing a profound crisis."

As it is a general crisis, the Poles stand a chance of being allowed to seek their own solution, which gives cause for hope. Another follows from the fact that the crisis has fully affected the Soviet Union.

The Eastern superpower must itself subscribe to reform if it is to enter the next century as a modern state, and that means that it must let other reformers in Eastern Europe go ahead with their reforms.

It must tolerate differences on its perimeter and can only lay claim to the priority of security interests by forgoing once and for all ideological, political and economic coordination.

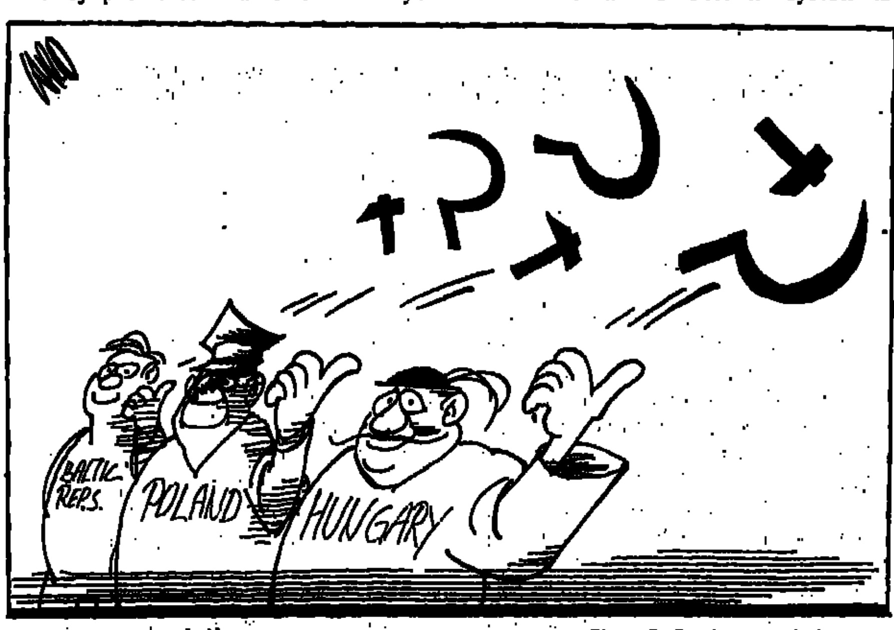
Pursuit of perestroika and maintenance of the Soviet empire are mutually exclusive.

Marx's dictum that no nation that enslaves another can itself be truly free still holds good. The East Bloc of old

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A Bonn delegation to Poland led by Employment Minister Norbert Blüm (centre) reassured the new Polish government of German help. At right is the new Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. At left is another delegation member, Bernhard Worms, North Rhine-Westphalian CDU. They are at a service in honour of the Black Madonna in Czestochowa. (Photo: AP)



Throwaway societies. (Photo: R. Canden/Rheinische Post)

IN THIS ISSUE

■ INTERNATIONAL

What Nato needs to do as perestroika enters its perestroika stage

Political changes in Eastern Europe have triggered activities in Nato that go far beyond the pact's military and arms control sectors.

Nato is the only institutional framework within which the three decisive prerequisites of an overall Western strategy can be drawn up. They are:

1. Comprehensive analyses of the very different events in communist countries by means of an exchange of knowledge between the 16 Nato countries and their governments, think tanks and intelligence services.

2. Permanent consultations at senior government level with a view to coordinating national, European and American interests.

3. Combination of diplomatic, military, disarmament, economic, regional and global aspects to make up a cohesive Western approach.

It must be an approach capable of both adjusting to what might be dramatic events in Eastern Europe and co-operating with the countries of Eastern Europe in the most varied sectors.

The prerequisites for work in these three sectors did not need to be set up at the Nato summit held in Brussels at the end of last May, but they were systematically improved there.

They are the substance of the "final declaration" issued by Nato heads of state and government.

The first specific conclusions were reached from them at the Western economic summit *held in Paris in mid-July.*

All seven leading industrialised countries, plus the European Community, agreed to lend economic backing to the reform processes in Hungary and Poland, especially in Paris Club debt rescheduling.

The European Commission was instructed to take the initiative and ship urgently needed food to Poland.

The main emphasis of the analytical work is on assessing the likely course of events in the Soviet Union. It was noted in Brussels that the inundation of disarmament and arms control proposals by Mr Gorbachov dwindled after the Nato summit.

These diplomatic offensives, which caused initial to perplexity in Western corridors of power and overestimation of Mr Gorbachov and his prospects of success by a wider public, now seem to be exhausted, both in subject matter and in their psychology.

The Soviet leader is having to concentrate increasingly on domestic difficulties.

Experts on the East Bloc attach particular importance to the Moscow conference of Soviet Communist Party leaders.

Issues such as clashes between nationalities, the economic crisis and the Party's loss of authority triggered heated controversy at the conference and in the politbureau and the top leadership.

Solutions to these problems were not found, but fronts have emerged, led respectively by Yegor Ligachov, the politbureau member in charge of agriculture, and Nikolai Ryshkov, the Soviet Prime Minister.

These fronts would seem to indicate that increasing intention is being paid to who is in charge and that the Party is starting to offer resistance to the powerful role now played by the People's Congress and its ambitions to run the country.



"Perestroika has entered into a perestroika of its own," says a senior Nato diplomat, describing the reform crisis in the Soviet Union.

It wasn't just a matter of the domestic situation. There was growing domestic criticism of Mr Gorbachov's policy toward the countries of eastern central Europe.

It is a policy openly described in the politbureau and by some members of the central committee as too soft and "dangerous for the Soviet Union's imperial survival."

In Poland and Hungary there is felt to be a risk of the communist power structure breaking up "from above." In the GDR and Czechoslovakia a similar risk is seen "from below."

"Nationalism" is everywhere seen as taking up arms against "socialism." Sooner or later Moscow must think in terms of disciplinary measures.

This painstaking and cautious Nato analysis conveys the impression that the West can expect the course of reforms in the East Bloc to be unpredictable.

This surmise is relevant to Western security and disarmament policy, for which a clear norm was established at the Brussels summit conference in May.

The North Atlantic pact is expecting progress to be made at the Vienna conference on conventional disarmament, at the Start talks on strategic weapons and on the elimination of chemical weapons.

Nato is keen to see this headway accelerated, but doubts have now arisen whether the ambitious schedules can be kept to, especially a conclusion to the Vienna talks within six to 12 months as called for by President Bush.

That would presuppose the Soviet Union withdrawing much of its services manpower from eastern central Europe and thinning out forces in the Soviet Union west of the Urals.

It is doubtful that Moscow will want to now the Communists are no longer in sole control of Poland and Hungary and crises seem likely in Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Rumania.

Signs of a more definite defensive attitude in Moscow include the Kremlin's refusal to countenance Austria's aim of joining the European Community and its brusque rejection of President Bush's appeal to demolish the Berlin Wall.its brusque rejection of President Bush's appeal to demolish the Berlin Wall.

In this situation, of which a Soviet perestroika crisis is the keynote, Nato plans to do all it can to promote the Helsinki process for the sake of human rights and to end the "painful division of Europe that we have never accepted," as the Brussels final declaration puts it.

Features of the peace settlement envisaged in Europe are outlined in unprecedented clarity. "The Wall that divides the city (Berlin) is an unacceptable symbol of the division of Europe. We aim at a state of peace in Europe in which the German people can regain unity in free self-determination."

The reason why this formula is so important is that a fine but clear distinguishing line is drawn in the Western debate on Germany's future between self-determination (including self-determination for Germans in the GDR) and the unity of Germany as a single state.

This distinction is neither acceptable for Germany nor legitimised by the wording of the Nato summit's final declaration.

In an interview President Mitterrand of France has stated a proviso. Self-determination for the Germans must, he said, be subject to agreement between "both German governments." Neither of the two German states could impose anything on the other.

This proviso is not in keeping with either the wording or the meaning of the Nato summit's final declaration, to which France was a signatory.

Nato diplomats feel the West must abide come what may by the guidelines agreed in Brussels.

They are felt to have played a part in ending turbulence caused by arms issues in the alliance and in strengthening the authority of the only Western institution in which security interests could be integrated.

The analysis of turbulent events in the Soviet Union and neighbouring countries makes the prospects look none too rosy for the German Question.

Moscow might even be determined not to jeopardise its strategic position in the GDR and might, as a result, back the GDR's hard-line course.

The credibility of the West's position must not be sacrificed to particular interests of whatever kind, especially where the future "unity of Europe" must begin: in Germany.

Herbert Kremp

(Die Welt, Bonn, 19 August 1989)

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can only be salvaged by jettisoning reform.

Mr Gorbachov seems to have appreciated this point. He draws a distinction, for instance, between the domestic set-up in Eastern European countries and their incorporation in the East Bloc's security system.

Eastern Europeans can differ with impunity as long as they don't pull out of the Warsaw Pact.

Another 1956 (when the rebellious Hungarians announced their withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and declared themselves neutral) would surely still not be tolerated by the Kremlin.

Another 1968 (when the Czechs and Slovaks tried to give socialism a human face) is being tolerated right now in Warsaw.

Nowhere are the Kremlin's security interests more immediately affected than in Poland, the historic marshalling ground for an invasion of Russia.

If the Soviet Union permits a transition of power there, tolerating emancipation from totalitarian communism and a return to the societal, economic and political pluralism of pre-Cold War days, then an end to the division of Europe is not mere wishful thinking.

It will then no longer matter that the internal and external security portfolios continue to be held by Communists.

This part of the machinery of state will be powerless in the face of the new values, dogmas and loyalties.

The way is free for reformers in Budapest and may soon be free in a Prague that is bowed but not broken.

It may one day even be free in the other German state, where an aged leadership would probably no longer have the strength to embark on a dialogue with its citizens even if it were to feel one were needed — which is why young people are voting with their feet wherever they can.

The trend may not affect for a while Rumania with its mini-Mussolini Nicolae Ceausescu ("Socialism in one family"), Bulgaria under Todor Zhivkov, who feels surrounded by conspirators, and Albania, still groaning under the legacy of Enver Hoxha.

But sooner or later, in the none too distant future, they too will want to room in the common European house that is taking steadily clearer shape as the grand schism of our century is drawing to a close.

Communists have never come to power in free elections. In Poland they are now striking the colours on the commanding heights of power after partially free elections in which voters inflicted a devastating defeat on them.

Maybe opportunity has knocked too soon for the Opposition. Maybe the tasks requiring reform are too stupendous. Maybe the forces of inertia will stall the impetus of the new men.

But history is always a tale of improvisation. It knows no libretto, to quote Alexander Herzen. It determines the pace at which events take place regardless of the cast, as it were.

They have no choice. They must, as Bismarck put it, try to touch the hem of God's cloak as he strides through history. There is no way in which they can opt out.

What we are experiencing is a historic caesura. Turbulence invariably occurs in such periods of revolutionary change. The outcome is hard to foresee and is usually not what was anticipated by either the protagonists or those whose hopes accompanied them. There is no guarantee of success. Will conflicts between nationalities and pre-democratic views on government recur and prevail?

Will mixed forms come to the fore? Will Eastern Europe's iron filings be attracted toward the (Western) European Community's magnetic field?

Post-communism has yet to *take clear* shape. No-one knows what *lies ahead,* says Adam Michnik. In *transitional* periods the light at the end of the tunnel at times turns out to be the headlight of an oncoming train, but nations time and again find a way out of seemingly hopeless situations to — freedom.

The desire for freedom, like the hunger for truth, honesty and human dignity, have nowhere been expunged from people's thoughts and feelings in the dark decades of communist dictatorship.

Theo Sommer

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 25 August 1989)

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■ HOME AFFAIRS

Why the Chancellor dismissed party strategist Geissler

Chancellor Kohl has fired the Christian Democrats' business manager, Heiner Geissler, and replaced him with a member of the party's younger generation, Volker Rühe, a 46 year old. The business manager is in a position to exert heavy pressure on the party's direction. The Chancellor tried earlier this year to remove Geissler, who had held the post for 12 years, by offering him a place in the Cabinet, but Geissler refused. The change has to be approved at a party conference next month. The CDU has been losing votes to the right-wing Republican extremist party in recent elections and Geissler's tactics were aimed at winning voters from the centre-left of the political spectrum. But there is much more to his dismissal than that. Günther Hartwig reports for *Stuttgarter Nachrichten.* In the other stories on this page, Horst Schreitter-Schwarzenfeld looks at the new man, Volker Rühe, for the *Frankfurter Rundschau;* and Gerd Rauhaus looks at Geissler's background for the *Nürnberger Nachrichten.*

Chancellor Helmut Kohl used to be an admirer of the party's business manager, Heiner Geissler. So why did he sack him?

Simply to move in a successor 12 years younger? This cannot be the primary motive.

The Chancellor would not have taken *that* risk at a time when the sores of recent election defeats have not healed and the hopes for better days are uncertain.

The main reason lies elsewhere. The choice of Volker Rühe as Geissler's successor means that a loyal up-and-coming talent in the CDU has moved to the fore of the party's organisation.

Party chairman Kohl knows that Rühe will strictly observe the requirements of the CDU party statutes by supporting him and by managing the party's business in agreement with him.

This sort of harmony has for some time been missing between the Chancellor and Geissler. To put it another way, Geissler allowed doubts to grow about the concord between him and the Chancellor.

Geissler was not even able to convincingly dispel rumours about alleged preparations to topple the Chancellor after the European elections.

Even Kohl's rivals within the CDU itself must now admit that he has scored yet another successful coup.

The selection of Rühe does not signify a fundamental change of direction. Rühe is a "man of the centre" and no sympathiser of the party's hardliners.

This makes it easier for Kohl to sell the reshuffle in the CDU headquarters as an almost normal succession of generations.

He has combined this move with a welcome revenge for a number of blows dealt by Geissler below the belt. Kohl never forgave him for using the word "blackout" in connection with the supply of submarine blueprints to South Africa.

Although the CDU retains its previous position in the overall political spectrum, Rühe will have to do more to curry the favour of the CDU's more conservative traditional voters without ignoring the centre-left potential much courted by Heiner Geissler. This seems difficult enough. Yet does the CDU have any option but to follow its chairman and his new confidant — albeit reluctantly — along this path?

Who is willing to rebel against Kohl and plunge the Chancellor's party into a deep crisis of identity at a time when the retention of power in Bonn is very much in the balance?

Once again Kohl has acted cleverly by satisfying the large number of Geissler critics inside and outside of the CDU and CSU without fulfilling the accompanying policy platform wishes.

This does not make the party chairman unassailable, but it does turn him into a highly unpredictable opponent when it comes to determining the party's course.

The CDU party congress in Bremen next month will hardly give Kohl's rivals in the party an opportunity to detect a swing to the right by the Christian Democrats.

The remarks by Bonn Environment Minister, Klaus Töpfer (CDU), on the environmental policy of the 1990s and the ideas expressed on the organisational restructuring of the party are unable to underpin Geissler's claim of a signal in the wrong direction.

The only chance the champions of the party's leftist wing, apparently caught unawares by Kohl's move, have of getting the better of their chairman is to vent their anger during the elections to the party executive in September.

Once the Chancellor has been re-elected as party chairman (even if this takes place with a record number of noes) and once he has pushed through his new business manager there will be no time left for the jostling over posts and issues during the general election campaign in 1989 and 1990.

Kohl has ingeniously dropped his pilot. The risk he has taken is calculated and limited.

Admittedly, his decision to sack his awkward companion means that he assumes sole responsibility for the outcome of elections in the months to come.

This show of strength, however, does not look like the act of desperation of a man who is shipwrecked. It is the clever move of a man who is still imbued with a belief in his success despite all adversities.

Günther Hartwig

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 23 August 1989)

New team. Kohl (left) and Rühe.

(Photo: dpa)

The new man arrives back at the political centre

Volker Rühe, the CDU's chief foreign policy expert in the Bundestag and now suddenly Chancellor Kohl's candidate as business manager, once said that foreign policy is brought about by ideas, "not by aircraft."

This remark was a gibe at Bonn Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP), who seems to be a permanent airline passenger.

Rühe, deputy chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary party in the Bundestag, also has had some biting and sarcastic comments to make on what he feels is the parliamentary party's waning influence on the policies of the Chancellor's Office.

He claimed that although the *parliamentary party was represented in the* government by a number of parliamentary secretaries of state, "only the Rumanian secret service knows who they are."

Some of the Chancellery's decisions on foreign and security policy have left Rühe looking beseechingly heavenwards.

There were signs more recently that Rühe had moved himself into an isolated position and was drifting on the periphery of Bonn's political centre.

The ambitious MP was not taken into account, for example, during discussions on who should succeed Manfred Wörner as Bonn Defence Minister.

Rühe once belonged to the "young guard" of CSU chairman and Opposition leader Helmut Kohl.

He may be surprised at this new chance. He asked for time to think about it before, as Kohl put it, he let himself be "bound by duty."

For a while Rühe and his political supporters were regarded as the "Genscherists" of the conservatives.

The SPD spread the term to distinguish between the relatively liberal CDU members open to Ostpolitik and the so-called *Stahlhelm* (steel helmet) hardliners led by Alfred Dregger.

Rühe did his best to rid himself of what he called the "poisoned praise of the SPD." The 46-year-old ex Hamburg teacher, whose uncomplicated American-style manners and boyish appearance often give the impression that he has only just graduated from university, has had a typical party career.

It began in the Junge Union, the CDU's youth organisation, and continued in its regional executive in Hamburg, in the Hamburg city parliament, the Bundestag, the Bundestag's foreign affairs committee and the executive committee of the CDU/CSU parliamentary party in the Bundestag.

Today, Rühe is a known authority in foreign policy circles from Washington to Moscow. Some of the contacts he has fostered, especially with the USA, have not always been totally welcomed by the Bonn Foreign Office.

He has made one major slip up. During a Bundestag discussion on Poland's western border in 1985, which took a critical look at the motto put out that year by the Silesian exiles congress, *Schlesien bleibt unser* (Silesia Remains Ours), Rühe referred to the "politically binding nature of the Warsaw Pact".

This formulation went far beyond anything the CDU has been willing to accept and his remarks triggered an outcry in exiles' organisations.

Chancellor Kohl claimed that Rühe later clarified his comments and now supported the government's position.

Was Geissler's successor obliged to return to the fold as a repentant heretic?

Rühe is certainly no dream partner for the Republicans, although his security policy views have moved clearly to the right, away from Genscher.

The advocates of nuclear deterrence will welcome him as an eloquent spokesman. His vision of the world is that of a liberal "hawk." A great deal of mystery still shrouds the Chancellor's choice of Rühe. One reason he gave at a press conference in Bonn made everyone sit up: it was because Rühe is "married to a refugee."

Horst Schreitter-Schwarzenfeld

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 23 August 1989)

Career is not yet finished — not by a long shot

After Heiner Geissler had been confirmed as the CDU's new business manager in 1977, Helmut Kohl said: "We do not need obsequious conformists, but upright men."

Geissler's predecessor, Kurt Biedenkopf, had been too upright for Kohl.

After four years of cooperation the relationship between Kohl and Biedenkopf had deteriorated so much that a change was in the wind. And it seemed that Kohl's close friend, Heiner Geissler, was the obvious choice for the difficult job.

The liberalisation of the CDU in the foreign policy field and the transformation of the CDU into a social people's party were tasks which appealed to Geissler and which made it easier to resign his office as Social Affairs Minister in Rhineland-Palatinate.

Like Biedenkopf before him, Geissler could hardly have dreamt at the time that his cooperation with the CDU chairman would end with a break-up of the "friendship between men" Kohl was so fond of emphasising.

Geissler's career is not over yet. He could still become an awkward personality for Kohl and the men behind his dismissal.

He remains a member of the Bundestag, which he became at the young age of 35.

No-one familiar with his personal history believes that he will settle for just that.

The Jesuit pupil from Sankt Blasien, raised in a leftist Catholic family from the Black Forest, was already chairman of the conservative student organisation

Continued on page 5

■ POLITICS

The major parties nail their competing environmental colours to the mast

Can the environment be saved by technological progress or only, in the final analysis, by personal sacrifices and asceticism?



The election campaign programme drawn up by the SPD for next year's general election (*Fortschritt '90*) favours the latter approach.

There is no other way of interpreting the envisaged *increase in energy prices*, in particular a planned DM0.50 increase in the price of a litre of petrol.

The Social Democrats appear to side with the motto: a mobile car pollutes the environment more than a stationary one. Consequently, people must be persuaded to drive as little as possible.

The SPD feels that sacrifices have to be made in other fields too if the ecological transformation of industrial society is to stand any chance of becoming reality.

Apart from plans to raise the mineral oil tax the party hopes to introduce other environmental taxes.

If the SPD has its way the already existing effluent tax will be supplemented by a special tax to keep the air clean, a tax on non-returnable bottles, a tax on waste, a tax on mass animal farming and a fertiliser tax.

The Federal Constitutional Court stipulates that all these taxes can only be collected for a specific purpose.

The effluent tax, for example, can only be used to purify effluent.

This principle, however, also means that citizens do not, as in the case of the *Öko-Steuer* tax, get their contribution back in monetary form, but at most in the form of a higher quality of life.

Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD's potential chancellorship candidate, views the ecological transformation of the industrial society as an "eminently economic element."

The reduction of purchasing power in favour of a cleaner environment is bound to have economic repercussions, the exact nature of which is not yet clear.

All the SPD's environmental plans presuppose that consumers make sacrifices on behalf of the environment.

The party commission dealing with these plans expects higher energy taxes to provide the treasury with about DM30bn.

Although it claims that the citizens will "get their money back" this will not be possible in every case.

The standard allowance for long-distance travel and commuting, which the SPD would like to introduce to make the taxation system fairer, are not going to be particularly beneficial to the rural population, doctors or commercial travellers — all groups of persons who have to travel a great deal. The planned increase in the basic tax-free amount would save a single person DM500, but this cannot offset the increased financial burden on people whose jobs necessitate frequent travel.

SPD spokesmen refer to the possibility for members of such groups — including haulage contractors — to deduct higher business costs from their taxes. This, however, only provides partial compensation.

Altogether, SPD experts expect a cost reduction of DM5.5bn for industry, but fail to mention that this will be offset by the higher costs for petrol and mineral oil as a raw material.

As Wolfgang Roth, the party's economic spokesman, pointed out, these costs would be passed on by industry in the form of price increases for consumers, thus triggering inflation.

Those who play down this fact overlook the implications for the labour market.

There is every indication that the environmental tax intends bringing about a certain top-down income redistribution.

The "man on the street", the old-age pensioner, the unemployed and the recipients of social security benefit are to be given financial relief, even if they only make a small contribution or none at all towards saving petrol.

How are the SPD plans likely to affect the international competitive situation of the Federal Republic of Germany as an *industrial location?*

Oskar Lafontaine likes to point out that a price of a litre of petrol in France (DM1.70) or Italy (DM1.95) is much higher than in Germany and would still be higher if a DM0.50 tax were imposed.

Nevertheless, the increase in energy costs for German industry would reduce Germany's competitive edge on, say, France.

Admittedly, all the other parties now trying to take over the role of trailblazer in the ecological transformation of industry from the SPD must also face up to the same reservations.

In the long run our society cannot avoid higher costs for the protection of the environment, since the earth's resources are limited.

In an effort to keep pace with the innovative zest shown by the SPD in this field Bonn Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer (CDU) issued a "government statement" on environmental protection.

He emphasised that the full force of the law must be brought to bear wherever there is a serious threat to the environment.

Apart from specific regulatory laws, however, consumers and industry should be given incentives to do more to protect the environment.

Töpfer, therefore, pins his hopes on market forces. His remedies include improved information for consumers, innovation aid for the development of environment-friendly technologies and a more flexible approach by firms towards greater cooperation and spreading costs.

Töpfer, of course, will also need taxes to do all this.

He adds a waste disposal site tax, a nature conservation tax and a carbon dioxide tax, to be based on the actual pollution levels of consumers and industry, to the SPD's list of environmental taxes.

In principle Töpfer intends retaining the motor vehicle tax as he already feels that it has contributed towards savings in energy.

He also wants this tax to be related to exhaust levels.

He plans to increase the price gap between unleaded and leaded petrol even further in favour of the former.

The entire concept is incorporated in a leading motion to be tabled during the CDU's national conference scheduled to take place in Bremen mid-September.

Töpfer is hoping for agreement with the SPD on this issue.

This makes sense, since there is little point squabbling at a national level in view of the worldwide nature of environmental problems.

Not all politicians, however, seem to have realised that increased expenditure for the environment clash directly with the social improvements planned by all parties.

How can people be expected to pay even more for social benefits if the taxes and costs for water, waste, heating, petrol and gas are also increased?

The ambitious plans for higher child and nursing allowances can only be financed if cuts are made elsewhere.

This explains why the SPD commission is so restrained about the social policy component of its Fortschritt '90 programme; at least DM*30bn* are missing for the realisation of their plans.

The proposal to reduce the cost of the Bundeswehr by DM10bn only covers a third of the gap and is thoughtless in security policy terms.

The conservative union between the CDU and CSU would also have to practice greater asceticism.

A paper presented by the union's employee wing, the CDA, calls for a number of social improvements, especially for *families, suggesting that they* should be financed by doing away with social benefits which no longer make *sense.*

It is still not clear *which* benefits the CDA has in mind.

It looks as if the Federal Republic of Germany will continue to improve its respectable worldwide reputation in the field of environmental protection.

All the efforts by the various political parties at a national level, however, must bear in mind that this country is only a tiny part of the world.

Effective environmental protection must become a foreign policy issue.

Bonn Chancellor Helmut *Kohl has* spoken frankly on the *tropical forests* issue.

In view of the rapidly growing world population figure the problems facing our own society are basically no more than fringe problems.

Billions of people throughout the world need more energy, more raw materials and more food.

Sacrifices we may make cannot satisfy these tremendous needs. They can only be satisfied with the help of technological innovations.

The industrialised countries must help find a solution, but in doing so they must also give industry financial room to manoeuvre.

"If we ask the poor countries to solve their environmental problems by making sacrifices we are going to witness a socio-political catastrophe instead of an environmental catastrophe," Professor Hans Maier from Munich contended during the last *Bergedorfer Gesprächskreis* discussion.

Asceticism or technological progress? Both are necessary.

Sacrifices which impede innovations are the poorest of all conceivable solutions.

Fides Krause-Brewer

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 18 August 1989)

■ REFUGEES HEAD WEST

East Berlin must act on treaty obligations and allow people freedom of movement

The writer of this article, Rupert Scholz, is a leading Christian Democrat. He is professor of constitutional law at Munich University and a former Berlin Senator of Justice and Federal Affairs and ex-Federal Defence Minister.

The growing numbers of refugees and applications for exit permits from East Germany are a dramatic demonstration of the distress of the Germans and their divided nation.

So is the latest headline news of squatters in Bonn's mission in East Berlin and its embassies in Prague and Warsaw and of the closure of the East Berlin mission and the embassy in Budapest.

It is not merely a matter of the absurdity of the Wall and barbed-wire emplacements, which have failed in nearly 30 years to separate the Germans, although the wave of refugees has served to confirm this absurdity yet again.

It is one of unlimited impotence — the powerlessness of governments in Bonn and East Berlin in the face of people who only want to exercise their human right of freedom to live and travel where they choose, as Germans, in Germany.

East Berlin is, naturally, well aware of this state of affairs, but the powers that be are increasingly taking shelter behind their inflexibility and hostility toward reform.

They are doing so even though the Gorbachov phenomenon will catch up with them sooner or later and even though they will not, in the long term, be able to negate the breakneck pace of processes of change and renewal, especially in Hungary and Poland.

Poland and Hungary are, of course, nation-states. Even in the greatest distress Poles and Hungarians still feel attached to their native countries.

That is a fundamental difference between the situation in the German Democratic Republic and in other East Bloc countries.

Yet the GDR stands to derive least benefit from hiding its head in the sand, such as by limiting the powers of Wolfgang Vogel, the East Berlin lawyer who deserves so much credit for his services to humanity and human easements in divided Germany over the years.

His name ought to stand for greater humanity and a greater degree of glasnost, or openness, rather than for "ostrich approach" now adopted by the East Berlin authorities.

The Federal Republic can have no interest in depopulating the GDR, but it is legally and morally bound to help people in the GDR to the best of its ability.

In recent years a certain amount of headway has been made by means of a quiet, pragmatic and, above all, operative Deutschlandpolitik.

But every refugee and every exit permit application demonstrates that this policy alone is not enough.

Feelings of hopelessness and lack of prospects are growing in the GDR at a rate that sets strict limits to a policy of pragmatic consideration of the individual case, up to and including payment of ransom money for the release of individuals.

The concept of human easements in exchange for economic or financial counter-concessions will not work for much longer.

The GDR must open up at long last, both internally and externally. It isn't that people in the GDR don't love their country. But it is a love sorely tried by resignation and hopelessness.

Hungary and Poland have a lesson to teach the GDR, that of motivating people by a policy of opening and readiness for reform.

If the GDR fails to learn this lesson, history could sweep it aside faster than some people in East Berlin may imagine in their wildest dreams.

But the Federal Republic must be prepared to make its contribution, and it will not be enough to refer to inalienable legal viewpoints on German unity and a single nationality for all Germans.

Yet it would be equally wrong to forgo these legal viewpoints and, say, recognise GDR nationality, as the GDR has repeatedly called on the Federal Republic to do.

That would be not only an irresponsible breach of legal obligations but a serious offence against these unfortunate people.

On the other hand we must be honest and straightforward with people in the other part of Germany. Painful though it may be, the Federal Republic will have no choice but to tell people in the GDR, and to tell them time and again, that its options, up to and including paying ransom money for the release of individuals, are strictly limited.

That is bound to give rise to further disappointment here and there, but the widespread feeling among people in the GDR that Bonn will set matters right, be it by paying ransom money or whatever, may be expecting too much of the Federal Republic as there is nothing doing unless the powers that be in East Berlin are prepared to play ball.

Telling people a straight story does not mean shrugging one's shoulders in resignation. People in the GDR appreciate being told the truth and will be the readier to take heart the more they feel there is a genuine desire for and intention of embarking on more fundamental change.

One step in the right direction is the CSCE Final Act and the 15 January 1989 final document of the Vienna CSCE review conference.

In this document the GDR committed itself in principle to freedom of movement and to unlimited respect for the right of every individual to "leave any country, including his own, and to return to his own country." This international legal commitment was undertaken regardless of intra-German disputes on nationality and the separate sovereignty to which the GDR is so fond of referring.

The GDR must be taken at its word, as given at the CSCE. That isn't "intervention in the domestic affaqirs of the GDR." Since the CSCE resolutions granting freedom of movement has ceased to be a purely domestic issue.

It is high time the GDR kept its international legal undertaking and permitted freedom of movement.

One result would be greater freedom, another greater legal security: freedom in the shape of the commitment in principle to freedom of movement and security in respect of its legal implementation.

An example of how to set about it is, to some extent, the development in travel facilities between the GDR and the Federal Republic.

The GDR has made encouraging headway in recent years, allowing many people to visit the Federal Republic. Applications were initially approved or rejected arbitrarily. A fairly standard practice has since developed.

It is a practice that may not rule out arbitrary rejection of a visa application, but it does make it more difficult for the authorities to reject an application out of hand.

This increase in travel between the two German states is felt by some to have led to an increase in the number of applications for visas to leave the GDR for good.

Many travellers are said to have felt that the Federal Republic was the better German state and one they would sooner have as their true home.

Yet it is a mistake to infer that the increase in intra-German travel led to the increase in numbers of exit permit applications.

Many people in the GDR are still denied freedom to travel, and as a rule entire families are still not allowed to visit the West. Only individuals are allowed to do so, leaving the rest of the family behind as hostages, so to speak.

That is a practice which is more than likely to trigger an increase in the number of exit permit applications.

The sense of lack of freedom and above all of legal uncertainty, the fear of fresh arbitrary action is a constant companion of every journey to the Federal Republic and every exit permit application.

The GDR must go further. It must give its inhabitants a legal guarantee that they can leave the country, temporarily or for good, whenever they so wish.



East Berlin talk of 'intervention in domestic affairs' is nonsense, says Rupert Scholz. (Photo: Poly-Press)

If people were to be given legal guarantees on this point there would be a genuine opportunity of regaining their confidence and making them readier not to leave their country for good but to stay there, or at least to return.

This is the direction in which the Federal government must try to progress. It must try to come to terms with the GDR that specify its CSCE commitments on the basis of a bilateral agreement.

That is sure to be extremely difficult and to take ages, but the GDR has no choice, and its leaders must at long last realise that this is the case and act accordingly.

Much the same is true of the Federal Republic in that it must try and come to terms with the GDR on this basis in order to do justice to its responsibility toward people in the GDR.

It is an approach that is fraught with risks, but the attempt must clearly be made.

Equally clearly, it cannot hope to succeed unless substantial concessions, mainly of a financial nature, are made by the Federal Republic.

As it happens, concessions of this kind form part of the philosophy of the present, largely successful Deutschlandpolitik.

What matters is to impress even more clearly on the GDR that concessions of this kind are intended solely for people in the GDR and to improve living conditions in the GDR, as opposed to "stabilisation of the system" or the like.

Official pronouncements in the Federal Republic frequently stress the point that there is no intention of "destabilising" the GDR.

Arguments along this and similar lines have long been way out of touch with reality. The system in the GDR is neither stable nor capable of stabilisation.

All that can be stabilised is people's readiness to stay there or to do more for their country.

Economic and other concessions to the GDR are in many cases not seen by people in the GDR to be what they really are, or at least are primarily intended to be: a means of helping people in the GDR as opposed to a system that has long shown itself to be a failure.

The powers that be in East Berlin are well aware of the present trend and will increasingly come to realise that they stand or fall by people's readiness to stay in the GDR.

So now is the time for action — for the good of the people and of Germany as a whole.

Rupert Scholz

(Die Welt, Bonn, 15 August 1989)

Continued from page 3

Ring Demokratischer Studenten (RCDS) during his studies of jurisprudence in Tübingen and soon became the chairman of Baden-Württemberg's Junge Union.

Following a brief period as judge he became a professional politician, taking on the post of head of the ministerial office of the Labour and Social Affairs Minister in Stuttgart.

At the age of 37 he joined Helmut Kohl's cabinet in Rhineland-Palatinate.

The "Planning Group for Social Issues" he set up predicted an explosion in the costs of the health system at a time when everyone still acted as if there were unlimited resources.

The committed social policy expert, who won the support of fringe groups for the CDU which previously had no lobby, was also a producer of ideas and an organisational talent as the party's general secretary.

Not all his ideas turned out to be practicable. Franz Josef Strauss even felt that some of Geissler's ideas were Social Democratic, an accusation which Geissler felt was damaging to the party.

His relationship to the CSU was strained. Geissler often hit his political opponents below the belt.

His insults were calculated, for example, in his campaign against the "pensions swindler" Helmut Schmidt or in his election campaign slogans such as "Freedom instead of Socialism".

His interpretation of political honesty was often criticised by his political rivals.

Gerd Rauhaus

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 22 August 1989)

■ COMPANY BUY OUTS

By management, rarely; by employees, more rarely; by everybody, with suspicion

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Management buy-outs are rare enough in Germany. But it is like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack to find a case of employees buying out a firm. At first glance, this is surprising.

Two points speak for a financial involvement of all or a majority of a company's workers and salaried employees: *The capital they contribute is cheap money.* In addition there is unlikely to be a change in the workforce when employees take on a certain part of the entrepreneurial risk themselves. Then, because of increased motivation, the company can expect greater commercial success.

Anyone who supposes employees are wary of taking risks would discover from the realities that this was not quite true. If the rare cases of buy-outs by employees are looked at more closely it emerges that each of the instances have a lot in common.

All buy-outs come about out of necessity. In every case the workers and salaried staff are prepared to take on considerable risks.

The risks they face are twofold: if the experiment fails they not only lose a job but also their savings, which in this case they would need badly.

The hundred or so workers at Dittmers GmbH, Hamburg, contributed DM5,000 or more each when the Harmstorf Group went bankrupt two years ago. They were able to gain the company's independence. It produces anti-corrosive products.

Another example is the DM400,000 own capital which the salaried staff at the Piper Handelsvertretung in Calden, near Kassel, scratched together. Each employee contributed a minimum of DM15,000.

This involvement lead to the banks making loans of millions. Today the company is flourishing — it is now operating as an AG, a joint stock company.

The successful restructuring of the Panda shoe factory at Naila in Bavaria was achieved not only thanks to good management but to the fact that the 330 employees rolled up their sleeves and got down to work.

Of the total 220 contributed between DM1,000 and DM50,000 from their own savings to save the company, which is now registed as Seifert & Klöbet GmbH & Co. KG.

It should not be forgotten, of course, that in this case a subsidy of DM1.2m was made from regional funds, guaranteed by the Bavarian Economic Affairs Ministry.

And everything would have been of no avail if the company's managers and remaining exployees had not provided DM1.5m from their own pockets to keep the company, set up in 1884, afloat.

The fact that employees are seldom asked to purchase a company by the old owners, or rarely asked to lend money to the company from new owners, is not because employees and salaried staff are not prepared to take risks. There are other reasons for this.

Compared with Britain or the United States the buy-out is little known in this country and is therefore regarded with suspicion as a form of handing over ownership of a firm.

"The classical German manager, confronted with the idea of buying up his own company, has trouble with the idea itself. He is irritated by it and in most cases too much is being asked of him."

This comment comes from the Munich-based Matuschka Group, a consultancy firm which has specialised in the buy-out field.

For this reason management simply does not take the trouble to go along the admittedly difficult path of getting employees to take up shareholdings in the company.

There are also psychological reasons for this, according to Rolf Merchel from the working group for the promotion of partnerships in the economy, based in Kassel.

He said: "Owners of medium-sized companies have come late to the idea of inviting their executives to buy up the firm.

"And even fewer are happy with the idea of offering the whole of their labour force participation in a takeover."

There are considerable organisational hurdles standing in the way. An employee buy-out demands a detailed knowledge of company and tax law. If there are gaps to be filled here the time left to mount a rescue operation is often not sufficient.

But Thomas Krenz of J. Henry Schoder, Hamburg-based company consultants, pointed out the most important reason for this. From his experience he believes that executives who take over a company are not prepared to share future profits with workers.

Contrary to the cases already quoted most of the approximately 50 buy-outs which have taken place in the Federal Republic involved healthy companies.

Consultants would have a difficult time finding a third party to be interested in a washed-out, delapidated firm among banks and commercial circles, which usually have a major financial role in such takeovers. A typical management buy-out is quite different.

Then a family concern cannot control new owners who come from their own workforce. They prefer to safeguard the continuity of the firm by selling out to their executives.

Schroder and Matuschka are market leaders in this specialised sphere of consultancy. Herr Krenz of Schroder said: "In a normal deal the investors reserve 80 per cent of the equity for themselves and 20 per cent for the executives." And neither side will backtrack for the benefit of the workers.

Krenz pointed out a specific German characteristic as a reason for the limited number of worker buy-outs in this country: mystery-mongering.

It might be customary to talk about pay in the USA, but here in this country the subject is still taboo.

Herr Krenz said: "Managers who are involved in buy-outs want to avoid at all costs disagreeable questioning from the works council."

It is feared that the works council would small-mindedly compare the few percent of dividends on a worker's share, with a face-value of DM100, with the money that the new owner gets in the distribution of profits on his shares per year and could come to a fatal conclusion: "He is earning millions."

Such an attitude could lead to "create unrest" in a company. For this reason managers do not like entering into the risks of a takeover of a company with the workers.

Nevertheless new owners and executives in a flourishing firm do stick their necks out and offer a participation in the company to the workforce.

This happened, for instance, with Professor Dieter Weidemann, boss and shareholder of the Pittler Maschinenfabrik AG in Langen, near Hagen.

A little while ago this company celebrated its 100th anniversary, an event that five years ago no-one believed could possibly take place.

This old-established company had piled up losses amounting to DM150m, and the main shareholder, Gildemeister AG in Bielefeld, was in such deep trouble itself that it did not have the means to rescue its subsidiary, teetering on the verge of bankruptcy.

A gift

This year every Pittler worker can buy two profit-sharing certificates, each worth DM1,000. In the next two years they can each buy two more.

As an anniversary gift Pittler is also giving employees this year DM1,700 and next year DM500.

But in 1991 Pittler workers must provide the DM2,000 for that year's profit-sharing certificates themselves

But what is more important is that this participation involves real risk capital. If there are losses the capital base is reduced. Nevertheless the workers in Langen are going along with this. More than 60 per cent took part in the first phase.

Horst Biallo

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 19 August 1989)

Head-hunters: frivolity frowned upon

Head-hunters do not have a good reputation in Germany. They operate on the periphery of the state-run employment centres which have a monopoly.

Private people are legally prevented from acting as job brokers — except they can find jobs for artists.

Job agencies are allowed to look for candidates for a job — but only when they are contracted to by a private firm. They cannot, on their own initiative, present companies with curricula vitae of applicants.

The job of head-hunter has not been clearly defined. Almost anyone can become one.

One successful operator is Kurt von Gleichen. He is founder and partner, with Dirk Hansen, of Von Gleichen Personalberatung GmbH. The reputation of the industry is why he considers it important to present his firm in a serious and credible light.

His posh address in Frankfurt's Westend is a factor in setting charges.

Another is his 20-man team. He said: "All of them have management experience. Confidence is called for to discuss matters with clients."

His calculations have paid off. Baron von Gleichen, 74, will have a turnover in fees of almost DM5m this year. His personnel consultancy firm is a market leader in the Rhine-Main area.

In national terms he puts his firm in between eighth and 12th place. He says growth had been at a constant rate of 20 per cent annually. He intends to maintain this, "but it is tough work," he said.

The management team, apart from Baron von Gleichen and Hansen, includes Michael Baack, Günther Kornbusch and Heinrich von Prittwitz. So long as the market continues to grow there is nothing to stop them.

Industry is finding it increasingly more difficult to fill management posts from within companies.

An end of the boom is not in sight. On the contrary: the single European market will call for additional management positions, which have to be filled. Europe needs executives with international experience.

Von Gleichen said that in emergencies, staff was recruited in the United States.

How does he discover clients and candidates? He said that being gregarious was the key to the job. "We go everywhere where we can meet people, to congresses, seminars and lectures."

The fact that the German-American Chamber of Commerce was in Frankfurt was important.

Target groups, clients and candidates, could be approached directly, at such events as the "Hessischer Kreis," for instance. Here managers from major companies meet politicians involved in economic affairs and artists.

Or in the "Marketing-Tischrunde" where specialists from the second and third levels of management discuss sales problems once a month.

Are these efforts worth it? Von Gleichen said: "We do 70 to 80 per cent of our business with follow-up contracts."

He did not have much to say about the search for special candidates. That is a professional secret. Or is the matter embarrassing to him?

The telephone is an important item of equipment. He finds the executives he hunts down for his clients through tried and tested personal contacts.

A maximum age is no longer placed on a job. Experience has become important again.

He looks for top managers for executive positions as well as for specialists at a level just below this.

There is a demand throughout every branch of industry. Kurt von Gleichen said that at present most interest was concentrated on executives for the textiles and engineering indutries.

The Von Gleichen Personalberatung organisation rarely fails to fulfil the contract. Ulf they cannot meet a client's wishes, they return the contract. "But naturally we send in a bill for our charges up to that point. We have incurred expenses."

He pointed out that "working on the basis of success is regarded as being frivolous in our industry."

(Die Welt, Bonn, 21 August 1989)

■ BUSINESS

Readjusting textiles industry has manpower shortage



The decline of the German textile industry in the 1960s and 1970s was swift and dramatic. In 1960 it employed 620,000 people. By last year the industry's payroll was down to 218,000.

The number of firms has declined accordingly, and textiles was seen by many as the textbook example of an industry on its deathbed, with the reasons for its imminent demise plain to see.

They were, for one, that Germans were spending much less on clothing in relation to their ready cash. But the main reason was low-cost imported clothing, sales of which rooketed.

The figures seem to indicate that rock bottom has not yet been reached. Payrolls are still on the decline, as is the number of firms in the business.

But this impression is deceptive. Textile firms have faced up to competition and rationalised to an enormous extent.

German manufacturers now have the most up-to-date machinery in the world, and where automation is not enough to offset the low wages paid in competing countries, textiles are manufactured abroad.

The success of this strategy is indicated by the fact that the Federal Republic of Germany is the world's third-largest exporter of textiles, outperformed only by Italy and Hong Kong.

Ironically, this position is now jeopardised by a shortage of staff. The textile trade used to make headline news by mass dimissals; it is now seriously short of manpower.

"You can't get staff for love nor money," says Walter Holthaus of the Knitwear Industry Association.

Wolfgang Haussecker, deputy business manager of the Baden-Württemberg Textile Industry Association, agrees. "Skilled staff are in demand. We badly need master-craftsmen, engineers and technicians."

That brings us back to the heart of the problem, which is that the textile industry is mainly running out of experts.

Technological progress continues unabated, with manufacturing techniques and management organisation growing steadily more sophisticated, but the generation of master-craftsmen and engineers who survived the structural change of the 1960s and 1970s are reaching retirement age, and there aren't enough younger staff to take their place.

The Textile Industry Association has figures at the ready. The industry needs about 400 new master-craftsmen a year, but only 180 mechanics a year are now taking their master's exams.

The gap is even wider where engineers and technicians are concerned. About 250 technicians a year are needed but only 50 qualify, while the 140-odd textile engineers a year who graduate from the trades colleges in Reutlingen, Münchberg, Krefeld, Mönchengladbach, Wuppertal and Kaiserslautern can take their pick of 500 jobs.

The situation is much the same for graduates of Stuttgart and Aachen technical colleges, with about five jobs going for each graduate.

The real gap is wider still, with the textile industry competing with others for the few skilled tradesmen and managerial staff available.

Only 44 per cent of textile engineering graduates go on to work in textiles. Chemicals, clothing and textile machinery hire most of the remainder.

Herr Haussecker says in Stuttgart that the labour market situation is made even worse by the fact that about 60 per cent of trades college students in textiles are women.

They are mainly interested in quality control, laboratory work and production planning.

Few if any women are interested in working in "textiles proper" because of shift work. Yet works managers will be in short supply for years, he says.

The employers have largely themselves to blame. They have failed to train staff in time, as the Textile Industry Association's own figures clearly indicate.

Fifty-three per cent of textile industry staff are semi-skilled, as against the 47 per cent who have learnt a trade.

Yet the industry is not just short of master-craftsmen, engineers and technicians. Machinists and mechanics, trades that take two to three years to learn, can be sure of a job even if they don't want to qualify as master-craftsmen or technicians.

But the red carpet is really rolled out for textile engineers, regardless whether they are trades college or university graduates.

Herr Haussecker advises college students first to serve an apprenticeship. School-leavers with university entrance qualifications can serve a short apprenticeship, and as students they then don't need the practical semester.

What is more, an apprenticeship is an "entirely different groundwork for a course of study."

University students are advised against first serving an apprenticeship. Engineering graduates from college or university are basically interchangeable, but university graduates stand a better chance of promotion to boardroom level.

But getting a university or college place is the initial problem. At Reutlingen, for instance, the trades college is bursting apart at the seams.

But once this hurdle is cleared, students and prospective graduates can look forward to work that is both demanding and interesting.

The textile trade is in a constant flux, and with growing international ties even small and medium-sized firms welcome staff fluent in foreign languages with open arms.

That particularly applies to the knitwear industry, which has transferred production from Germany to other countries more rigorously than textiles in general.

"There are engineers and technicians who are constantly commuting between Albstadt, Porto and Izmir," says Herr Holthaus.

There are German factory managers who have run a production facility in Greece for 20 years too, and managerial staff with international experience are few and far between.

Languages are not all they need. A world traveller in the knitwear trade must be mobile, must bear up under pressure of deadlines and must be able to adjust to mentalities other than his own.

Women machinists are the real losers of internationalisation in the knitwear industry. Their wage costs are often simply too high in the Federal Republic.

Yet Herr Holthaus does not feel this is invariably the case. "A certain amount of production will continue to be made in Germany," he says. "So you can't say as a general rule that machinists no longer stand a chance."

Ralf Neubauer

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 19 August 1989)



Nice.

(Photo: Nik Boll)

Gorbymania hits jeans market

Colour is the keynote of men's fashion wear for spring and summer 1990, as shown by designers at the Cologne menswear show.

The 1,313 exhibitors from 42 countries were aiming at a steady development of existing fashions rather than innovations.

Only a strictly limited number of avant-garde designers experiment with new fashion ideas of the kind that give the trade a regular fillip.

Their services are in demand. Fifty-six per cent of German men claim to be interested in fashion.

They spend an average DM1,035 a year on clothing compared with DM1,131 by women.

The width of jacket lapels — at a show where many double-breasted suits were on exhibit — is set to change only slightly.

Styling will continue to be roomy, especially with the high waistlines of the new season's trousers.

There are many variations in the design of waistbands, belts and pockets. Short trousers — Bermuda shorts — can be worn on almost any occasion.

Jeans are more colourful. They are sequinned and have even more striking motifs than at present. Jeans from the Soviet Union are a new fashion line, using a snapshot of Mr Gorbachov as their advertising logo.

Based on a Russian designer's ideas but made in Italy the range includes jeans and jeans jackets, Bermuda shorts, tee-shirts and sweaters, decorated with Cyrillic script and Red stars.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 21 August 1989)

■ AVIATION

Delays and spiralling costs blamed on small-minded national interests

European economies were last year hit to the tune of 10 billion marks because of inefficiencies in aviation, according to a report commissioned by, among others, the German national airline, Lufthansa. It lays a great part of the blame on delays on the ground and in the air which it says are caused by the stubborn refusal of national political interests to give up national air-traffic controls and hand over to Euro-control, the centre which has been in place since 1960 but which is grossly underused. The report criticises the existence of 44 separate autonomous control centres. It says a flight from Frankfurt has to fly through seven central control areas and six intermediate areas to get to the Balearic Islands off the Spanish coast. Late arrivals cost airlines 1.95 billion marks mainly in wasted fuel; detours round airspace under military control used up 4.5 million flying hours and cost 3.6 billion marks; being forced by the system to fly at inefficient heights and on unfavourable approach runs cost another 1.4 billion marks. The report says with air traffic increasing rapidly, a modern, integrated traffic control system is the only way to bring the workload within the scope of the existing 12,200 air-traffic controllers and prevent the system from collapsing. This report is by Hans-Dieter Hamboch. It appeared in *Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt*.

Unbelievable bungling, technological backwardness and political obstinacy have brought European aviation almost to the brink of catastrophe, according to a study by a team of international experts commissioned by, among others, Lufthansa.

Their 65-page study has been issued by *Planungsbüro Luftraumnutzer*, a private organisation made up of representatives from Lufthansa, charter companies, the Frankfurt airport company and the aviation safety authority.

The report calculates that in 1988 alone damage to national European economies was 10 billion marks. This does not include annoyance and lost business caused by 330,000 hours of delay in takeoffs and arrivals.

The American Federal Aviation Agency calculates that delaying a passenger an hour costs DM43: no figure has been put on the cost of longer delays.

The 22 member-states of the European Civil Aviation Conference have made an urgent appeal for immediate measures to combat the chaos in the skies.

The view is that with earnings from aviation expected to double over the next 12 years, unless something is done there will be a breakdown.

The delays are shown in the report to be the result of egotistically hanging on to national sovereignty in the skies so that airspace is divided between 44 autonomous centres of control and innumerable sectors.

Since 1960 the Europeans have had a supra-national organisation, Eurocontrol, at Maastricht in the Netherlands. But more than a dozen European countries refuse to be sensible and hand over control to it.

The results of this home-made crisis can be seen in the summer months when millions of holiday-makers struggle to get away from the North to the sunny South.

The holiday brochures paint a picture of the best weeks of the year — but not the reality of it: that either the outward flight or the return one is likely to become a nightmare.

Delays lasting many hours are not unusual. Within the space of 12 months planes delayed by more than 15 minutes increased from 20 to 30 per cent at Federal Republic airports, and the tendency is on the increase.

The statistics show that charter flights are much more likely to be delayed for reasons of air safety at takeoff or arrival than scheduled flights.

The best example is the Balearic Islands, off Spain. A flight to the Balearics from Frankfurt has to fly through seven central control stations and six intermediate control points.

In America, on the other hand, where flight density is 60 per cent greater, three central control points are adequate for everything, operating under similar conditions.

In 1988 alone there were 330,000 delays to strain the nerves of air-travellers, who had to camp out like nomads in over-crowded airports.

The first six months of this year have shown that the situation is not getting any better.

Late arrivals cost airlines DM1.95bn in unnecessarily burnt fuel. If losses air-travellers sustain are added to this then delays cost in all DM3bn.

But that is not all. Detours which had to be made round air-space under military control cost DM3.6bn last year. Of the 4.5 million flying hours clocked up last year detours round military air-space accounted for 330,000 hours.

This is something like flying round the world eight times and costs carriers about DM6,800 per aircraft, adding DM2.2bn to costs.

In these delays passengers are estimated to have lost more than a billion deutschemarks.

Including allowances for interest rates the study reckoned that detours cost about DM3.6bn. A prime example is the peculiarities of the Brussels-Zürich leg. The route takes 45 minutes longer than is necessary because of the disastrous make-up of air-space control.

Considerable costs stem from flying at unfavourable heights as well. There are poor approach flights and as a consequence longer flying times which add DM1.4bn to the losses total.

The critics who drew up the study took into account as well the inadequate productivity of the Frankfurt-based Flight Safety Office (costing DM1.3bn) and the total costs to the economy (DM800m), bringing the total to DM10.1bn wasted.

The study mentioned, but did not count the cost of, the deplorable amount of environmental pollution — both noise and wasted fuel.

The experts are convinced that a total breakdown of the aviation system can only be prevented by a modern, integrated flight control system. Maximum estimates claim this would cost DM20bn. The losses incurred in two years would cover this.

A quick complete solution, however, is not in sight because of the conflict of interests and the allegedly old-fashioned control system.

If the governments and the European Community could agree on the short-term harmonisation recommended to the 22 countries by the Planunsbüro Luftraumnutzer, passengers' patience would be less strained.

But this would primarily be dependent on a technical alignment of the various control and supervisory systems and a network link-up of computers with the use of standardised software. This is not the case at the moment nor is there radar coverage, efficiently monitoring the whole area.

The study blames officialdom: "Like so many other state-controlled operations, the flight safety authority is not efficient. It should gear investments primarily to management criteria and the requirements of users. Until now decision-making has been in the hands of government officials without the participation of users."

Until now air companies have had to accept what officials lay down for them.

The study suggests that the only way out is to have an integrated system, a new Eurocontrol, centrally responsible for flight safety and only one flight safety system, which probably would not be fully operational for 17 years.

The present 44 flight control centres could be reduced by a half; under favourable conditions they could be cut to 12.

If this were done, it would mean that the current number of air-traffic controllers — 12,200 — would then be able to handle the predicted eventual eight million takeoffs and landings a year — double the present number.

The Planungsbüro experts believe that sovereign resonsibilities must be transferred to a membership council.

Fearing renewed state small-mindedness, the legal experts in the team have warned urgently against blocking efficiency in the old way on decisions in general principle with the insistance that they must be unanimous.

Hans-Dieter Hamboch

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 18 August 1989)

Lufthansa sees Far East run as main growth area

Lufthansa, the national German airline, is 65 per cent owned by the Bonn government. It was founded in Berlin in 1926 but was disbanded at the end of the war in 1945. In 1953, it was reconstituted. It has been making a profit since 1964 and has been paying dividends since 1969. It has 163 aircraft and employs 2,400 cockpit staff. In this article for *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, Klaus Dieter Oehler talks to Lufthansa's chief executive, Hans Ruhnau, and another board member, Klaus Menninger. Forecasts say that air traffic will double by the end of the century. Herr Ruhnau sees much of this expansion coming on the Far East run. Within five or six years, all Far East destinations would be reachable with non-stop flights.

Hans Ruhnau, head of Lufthansa, is not worried that Lufthansa will be at a disadvantage with the opening up of European aviation.

He thinks the greatest problem will not be the increased competition but the infrastructure of civil aviation: "If this isn't expanded, the opening up of aviation will end up in chaos in the skies."

But Lufthansa itself was in no position to introduce improvements in air safety. Klaus Menninger, Lufthansa's director for transportation policies, said the billions of marks the government was pouring into the experimental Transrapid hovertrain, which runs suspended on magnetised tracks, would be better spent on air safety.

But he said Lufthansa would find it interesting if a Transrapid railway could bring closer together the two North Rhine-Westphalian airports of Düsseldorf and Cologne/Bonn. Lufthansa would never participate in a company to finance such a project. Neither was it convinced that the Transrapid would be successful. Herr Menninger said if it were successful, it would take a long time.

The airline's top priority was modernisation and extending its fleet. It has 163 aircraft. This year alone 20 would be added at a cost of about DM1.6bn.

Until 1994 Lufthansa has placed orders for 86 new aircraft and the company has "a dozen or so options."

By the end of 1991 Lufthansa will only be operating planes of the highest efficiency and with an average age of less than four years.

Lufthansa is of the view that a large and modern fleet of aircraft will be imperative in the next few decades. Forecasts persistently predict that by the turn of the century air traffic will have doubled in volume.

Lufthansas expects there will be a steep growth in private air travel and in air cargo.

Herr Menninger pointed out that in the past 10 years air traffic had doubled. Lufthansa's carrying capacities have increased by 114 per cent since 1978. The volume of freight handled has increased by 107 per cent but the number of passengers has "only" increased by 46 per cent ove the same period.

The number of flights within the past ten years has increased by 51 per cent.

But growth will not be concentrated on Europe. There will be much more growth in the Far East than in the Old World.

The up-and-coming countries in the Far East are looking for links to the industrialised countries. Because ship and rail do not come into it, due to the considerable distances, more and more flights to Far East destinations will be required.

In May this year Herr Ruhnau said that in five to six years all destinations in the Far East would be reached with non-stop flights.

But Lufthansa wants to spread itself in Europe as well — before competition from abroad arrives.

The Cologne/Bonn Airport plays an important role in this. Until now the airport has not operated to full capacity. What could be more obvious then than

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■ ENERGY

Requiem for a reactor: 4-billion-mark nuclear power 'miracle' scrapped

High-temperature power reactor technology based on German research and development was once hailed almost as a wonder of the world.

Virtually all German political parties extolled it as a technological miracle. The Social Democrats were particularly enthusiastic, with SPD Research Ministers allocating funds generously.

The SPD *Land* government of North Rhine-Westphalia contributed a third of capital investment costs totalling DM4bn.

A large-scale research reactor at Uentrop, near Hamm, was to show the world what this reactor type could do in generating electric power for the Federal Republic of Germany and elsewhere.

In other countries the high-temperature reactor is still held in high esteem. The Soviet Union, for instance, sets great store by the process.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, where it originated, its reputation has suffered one setback after another.

Smaller, modular units are not being granted planning permission. The Hamm reactor has been out of action for months and is not to be recommissioned.

The power utility that operates it and the *Land* government of North Rhine-Westphalia, which is responsible for planning permission, have just agreed to mothball the reactor.

The industrial companies that built it feel the high-temperature reactor is still a promising export prospect. SPD members of the Bundestag, in individual statements or in Bundestag debates, continue to make mincemeat of it.

Social Democrat Klaus Kübler now says the Hamm reactor was a half-baked design that had been far too expensive from the outset to be of any interest in generating electric power.

This statement is a slap in the face for all previous assessments by Ministers and by SPD research and fuel and power specialists.

Taxpayers may wonder why they have to foot the billion-mark bill for a bad investment when Social Democrats were well aware from the outset that the reactor ought not really to have been built.

As in other instances in which taxpayers' money is written off, no-one is to blame, let alone can be made liable,



in the ranks of either politics or the civil service.

For years the SPD has absolved itself of responsibility for past power policy decisions at Federal or *Land* level by arguing that it had been wrong and had learnt its lesson.

Even if the Hamm reactor had run smoothly and not been bedevilled by stoppages, it would not have performed brilliantly in terms of either energy output or economic performance.

It wasn't intended to do so. It was built as the prototype of a new reactor design, and as it was a research reactor, the Federal and *Land* governments signed special agreements with the power utility that runs it to share operational and shutdown risks.

The Hamm reactor was envisaged as demonstrating the potential of a design that would lead to a reactor capable of more than just generating power.

It was also envisaged as generating high-temperature industrial process heat. North Rhine-Westphalia backed the project in the hope that Ruhr coal might one day be processed using surplus heat from nuclear power.

Great expectations were also placed in the new reactor on account of its safety provisions.

It would have done its duty as a research reactor more effectively if it had been allowed to run for another two or three years to gain practical experience.

In two to three years its stock of nuclear fuel, worth DM60m, could have been used up too.

Bonn Research Minister Heinz Riesenhuber still feels that letting the reactor run down and out for another year or two is the only way to shut the installation down in an orderly manner.

That was what the *Land* government and the operator originally intended. The reactor would then at least have earned the cost of its funeral, so to speak.

Herr Riesenhuber says it would have been able to generate electric power worth at least DM300m to recoup some of its losses.

In a letter to the North Rhine-Westphalian Premier, Johannes Rau, Herr Riesenhuber argues that unless the reactor is allowed to run down in an orderly manner there will be virtually no way to stop the operating company from going to the wall.

The funds contractually agreed are nowhere near enough to pay for demolition, which will cost at least an estimated DM500m.

No-one knows who is now going to foot the demolition bill. That looks likely to be the next bone of contention.

Over the years disputes have been so punishing that resignation has set in among the majority of shareholders in the operating company.

There are signs that the SPD, in cases where it has been able to wield local authority influence on individual electricity boards, has voted against carrying on with the project.

As the operating company is strictly separated, as an economic entity, from the other operations of the power utilities that are its shareholders, none of the shareholders themselves face further financial setbacks if the operating company is declared insolvent.

"It's a witchhunt," said business manager Aden of Dortmund chamber of commerce and industry last spring.

He argued that energy policy scenarios were being thought out, in a mixture of ideology, populism and anxiety, to give German energy technology the coup de grâce.

The Hamm reactor was an impressive example of the vacillation and inconsistency of research and energy policy in the Federal Republic.

He regretted to have to say that not even incorruptible experts who had no doubts whatever as to the reactor's safety were able to remedy this state of affairs.

The Hamm reactor, shut down before its time, would have provided valuable know-how for reactor technology elsewhere.

The only conclusion that could be drawn from the research project where Germany was concerned was that large-scale projects of this kind simply could not be carried out — or wouldn't last the distance — in the Federal Republic.

Klaus Broichhausen

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 21 August 1989)

Foggy picture in post-1992 crystal ball

Industrial associations, trade unions and research institutes differ on the repercussions they feel the post-1992 single European market will have on national energy policy.

These differences were outlined in views expressed prior to a Bonn hearing on the "single European energy market" held at the request of the CDU/CSU parliamentary party.

The electric power industry feels there will be little or no leeway for going it alone on energy policy in the single European market, although national interests may well tend to coincide on issues such as environmental protection, a reduction in CO_2 emission, rational energy use and ensuring that Europe is never again as dependent on Opec oil as it was in the early 1970s.

German power producers complain that national regulations, such as coal subsidies and environmental protection provisions, cost them roughly DM20bn more a year than their French counterpart, Electricité de France.

The German Aerospace Research Institute (DLR) argues that industrial power is relatively inexpensive in France, whereas electric power in general is less expensive in the Federal Republic.

German industry is said to pay electricity bills that are DM9bn a year higher than those paid by French industry.

German domestic consumers are said to save DM24bn a year in comparison with the cost of heating oil and motor fuel to French households.

The German coal industry association says that higher coal subsidies amount to a mere fraction of money the German economy has saved as a result of lower oil prices.

To safeguard the European Community's future energy supplies, local energy output must be stabilised in member-countries that have proven energy deposits of their own.

What that meant for the Federal Republic was the continuation of a policy aimed at maintaining a substantial domestic coal output.

The Confederation of German Industry (BDI) feels that in the long term all taxes on the productive use of fuel and power must be abolished.

In order not to jeopardise the competitive position of European companies the taxes, duties and levies they pay must not

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■ THE ARTS

Its first 20 years: publishing house that belongs to playwrights and authors

The publisher, Verlag der Autoren, regarded as a socialist enclave in the commercial publishing world, has been in business for 20 years.

It looks toward its third decade with confidence: it is a publishing venture that has proved itself.

Since 1969 it has blossomed out into being one of the best companies involved in the theatre with 100 contemporary writers on its list.

Authors include Botho Strauss, Heiner Müller, Günter Herburger and Hans Magnus Enzensberger. Others such as Gerlind Reinshagen, Friederike Roth, Dietor Forte and Fitzgerald Kusz have become well-known through the Verlag — and the Verlag through them.

There is then the younger generation of dramatists such as Stefan Dähnert and Klaus Pohl whom the publisher has promoted and whose works have, through these efforts, been put on in theatres.

Others, such as Heinrich Henkel, Renke Korn, and Gerhard Kelling, whose plays about the working world were frequently performed in the early 1970s, emerge rarely today. Yet they are also from the Verlag der Autoren stable and also have a place in the history of contemporary theatre.

It all began in the years of student protest in the 1960s, when worker participation was the key expression in industry. This expression did the rounds of the arts.

Karlheinz Braun, then head of the drama department in another publisher, Suhrkamp, rehearsed rebellion jointly with other publishers' readers.

There was internal conflict in Suhrkamp and it was impossible to come to an understanding with the power-conscious head of the publishing house, so Braun founded his own organisation, accompanied with a handful of Suhrkamp authors.

There was to be no company hierarchy and authoritarian decision-making; it was to be a cooperative.

What become of this model of a publishing house without a publisher? The hundred German-language contemporary authors are, via complicted company arrangements, at the same time owners of the publishing house. There is no single publisher.

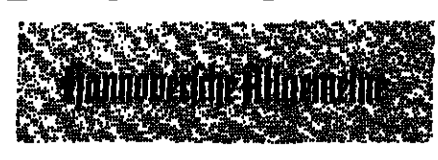
The two alternating managing directors (Braun has always been one of them) are elected by the annual general meeting of the authors, each to serve for three years. They are responsible for what is published.

Just as in other publishing houses the authors receive royalties, and as owners profits from the house's operations are divided among them annually.

Recently, however, the individual author's payments, made in dribs and drabs, were "socialised" and a publishing house foundation set up, which gives tax advantages. The foundation now awards grants and impressive prizes.

Verlag der Autoren claims, and it still holds true, that it belongs to its authors. Despite some qualifications, that has remained simply more than a left-wing advertising slogan.

Braun has made sure that programme continuity and commercial gravity were maintained over the two decades. He has been the guiding spirit of the pub-



lishing house and piloted it over every economic and managerial hurdle.

For many years the new role of "publisher" and publishing house owner was strange to the authors. They looked for a forceful publisher of the old school from among the elected managers.

It took time to get used to joint responsibility and there were endless debates on this with the authors about the lines the publishing house should follow, about the way in which artistic and political aims should be linked to one another.

All this was new and would have been unthinkable in a publishing house of the traditional kind.

Some of the internal conflicts were very tough and led eventually to a breakaway group, which founded its own publishing house, Autorenagentur.

The chances for authors to participate in decision-making (gently guided, it must be said) is still part of the publishing house's makeup, a publishing house which is not secretive, either internally or to the general public.

Despite its undisputed success many regard the Verlag der Autoren to be a harmless anachronism, which has only been able to prosper due to the clever and unobtrusive guiding hand of its spiritual leader, Braun.

In fact the participation in decision-making endeavours in the theatre, in the whole cultural sector as well as other publishing cooperatives are a thing of the past.

Braun has for 20 years determined the fate and history of the Verlag. He is the most active and best-informed man in our theatre today.

Over the past 20 years one can count on one hand the number of times the authors at the annual meeting have taken a vote on something and the result has gone against Braun's convictions.

The authors could not find a better person to serve their best interests. He finds the authors and selects whose works he will promote and represent.

Twenty years after the auspicious beginning the publishing house has become a kind of trade centre for contemporary theatre.

The history of the publishing house is a story of success. It has 100 contemporary German-language authors and 60 foreign language dramatists, including Dario Fo, Istvan Börsi and Antonio Skármeta, on its list.

It has a backlist of more than 700 plays of which 100 texts are for children's theatre. Then the house has been able to increase turnover continuously, from DM50,000 to DM5 million per year.

But there has been a bitter pill to swallow in all this. It should have gone bankrupt long ago according to conventional criteria if it had not in the course of the years gained two other interests.

One is the expanding media department, marketing radio and television rights and earning at present more than a half of the turnover; and the other the strong involvement in new translations of much-performed world drama from such great names as Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Molière, Chekhov and Strindberg.

The publishing house's profits from these secondary rights outstrips those from the royalties of living authors.

Although many plays from playwrights such as Botho Strauss, Heiner Müller or Fitzgerald Kusz have been very successful in theatres in Germany, the publisher, which has been active on behalf of young authors and which has promoted new drama as no other over the past 20 years, is aware that there is a change in the trend in drama.

Braun complains that *it is getting more and more difficult to have new plays performed at major theatres and to interest well-known directors in the work of new, young writers, particularly the work of young, unknown writers.*

Theatres, unwilling to take risks, turn to tried and tested plays. Important directors are turning to the wealth of classical drama. This presents small and medium-sized theatres in the provinces with opportunities to put on premieres.

This happens, however, to the playwright's disadvantage. His work is undervalued on the stage and quickly sinks into oblivion.

The times, then, are bad for authors. The Verlag der Autoren senses this stagnation more than most.

Eckhard Franke

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 19 August 1989)

Book fair has je ne sais quoi lined up

More books than ever are being published. They range from the literary ambitious to the significant and to what is merely good entertainment.

The reason is the number of new titles from German-language authors of both first and second rank. Then there is the fact that most well-known literary publishers have produced translations from the French — they have their eyes on the Frankfurt Book Fair, which has this year French literature as its theme.

Publishing houses such as Suhrkamp, Fischer (*Frankreich erzählt*), Klett-Cotta, Kiepenheuer & Witsch (they have brought out *Gabriel II oder Was kostet die Welt* by Erik Orsenna, which has sold 300,000 copies and which has won the Prix Goncourt), Piper, Schneekluth, the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt (which has begun to issue a collected edition of André Gide's work), and Hanser, which has published an almanach, *Vive la Littérature*, probably the most important book of reference to discover more than 120 contemporary French writers.

There is also a wide range of international literature appearing — such as *Das Doris Lessing Buch* from Hoffmann und Campe, Alberto Moravia's *Reise nach Rom* from List, Mario Vargas Llosa's novel *Lob der Stiefmutter* from Suhrkamp, Carlos Fuente's collection of essays *Von mir und anderen* from DVA and Andrzej Szczpiorski's short-stories *Amerikanischer Whiskey* from the Diogenes publishing house.

And what German-language books can be recommended? Diogenes has Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Durcheinandertal*, according to the publisher's blurb "politically and theologically explosive."

Hanser are publishing *Fragmente der Undeutlichkeit* by Büchner Prize-winner Botho Strauss.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger is giving himself a present for his 60th birthday on 11 November and publishing with Suhrkamp *Der Fliegende Robert*.

Fans of Gabriele Wohmann can take pleasure from her new collection of stories *Kassensturz* brought out by Luchterhand.

Suhrkamp are also publishing Peter Handke's *Versuch über die Müdigkeit*, and Rolf Hochhuth's *Sommer 14. Ein Totentanz*, published by Rowohlt, is sure to trigger off much discussion.

Günter Grass fans must make do with his *Skizzenbuch*, published by Steidl, which deals with his stay in India.

But all this is only the tip of the notorious iceberg. Rowohlt is taking advantage of Peter Rühmkorf's 60th birthday (25 October) to bring out three of his books.

Residenz is publishing H.A. Artmann, the Insel publishing house Hermann Lenz, S. Fischer is bringing out a collection of essays by Reiner Kunze, *Das weiße Gedicht*, and Hoffmann und Campe is publishing Manfred Bieler's memoirs of a child, *Still wie die Nacht*.

List is publishing the first part of Hilde Spiel's impressive memoirs entitled *Die hellen und die finsteren Zeiten*.

It will be known at the latest at the book fair, which takes place in October, who is going to make it to the top of thebestseller list. Certainly John le Carré's *The Russia House* will be there. It is published by Kiepenheuer & Witsch.

The British writer is sure to be joined by Ephraim Kishon with his satire *Total verkabelt* (Langen-Müller), Christine Brückner's novel *Die letzte Strophe* (Ullstein), and Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* from Verlag Artikel 19.

There is also another type of book which cannot go unmentioned — the blockbuster. Schneekluth are publishing a 1,340-page novel entitled *Heinrich VIII*.

The List publication *Der Prinzipal*, a story of circus life, is over 1,000 pages long, and Stefan Heym's *Der bittere Lorbeer*, from Bertelsmann, is 995 pages. James A. Michener's monumental work *Alaska* from Econ has 912 pages.

But you would miss the best of the seasons new books if you relied on the traditional publishers or solely on the advertising of the marketing men.

It is becoming more and more obvious that the exceptional books are not always being published by the three or four dozen big-name publishing houses. These books are to be found in the new publications lists of small publishing houses and the newcomers in the trade.

In Hamburg, for instance, the new Kellner-Verlag, strives to take up with an old tradition (since 1978) with the publication of Geno Hartlaud's *Einer ist zuviel*, and Uli Becker's *Sechs Richtige*.

The Grafit Verlag has just been set up in Dortmund and will continue the publishing programme of fiction and poetry from the Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag.

Büchner Prize-winner Botho Strauss has produced an erotic novel entitled

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■ MATHEMATICS

And thereby hangs a discretionary tale

The Egyptians and Babylonians did their calculations using discrete mathematics. The word comes from the Latin "discernere" and has two meanings: "discreet", meaning "wary" or "prudent"; and "discrete", meaning "separate, discontinuous, consisting of distinct parts." Yet, strangely enough, discrete mathematics is a new discipline. A man involved in its development in Germany is Professor Bernhard Korte. In explaining discrete mathematics' place in the world, he uses analogies with athletes like tennis player Steffi Graf and soccer star Diego Maradonna. Stefan Kornelius tells you all about discrete mathematics and Professor Korte's role in the columns of the Munich daily, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

Bernhard Korte is a mathematician and the founder of a research college for highly talented people. He is Professor for Operations Research and director of the Institute for the Application of Mathematical Methods for the Preparation of Optimal-effective Decision-making at Bonn University.

For the past two years he has also been head of the Research Institute for Discrete Mathematics at the university.

And because he has an international reputation in his discipline and his institute is internationally of the first rank, Professor Korte, 50, has in addition set up the Research College for Discrete Mathematics, an elite seminar, a course for the highly-talented, an arena for the best in the world in this discipline.

No other university in Germany has a research college of this kind.

The idea emerged in Cairo, in the inner court of the Ibn-Tulun Mosque when, a few years ago, Korte met Horst Niemeyer, general secretary of the Foundation for German Science, Essen.

The Foundation has worked together with the *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia to set up the financing for the college, always remembering Professor Korte's exhortation that no matter how good the best was it could always be better.

The plans for the college were completed at the beginning of summer. The *Land* and the Foundation have offered the research college DM750,000 annually over the next 15 years to support a detailed programme.

Highly talented mathematics and computer science students can begin special courses and take part in summer schools.

The best of them do a doctorate at the *Institute*: post-doctorate grants from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation will support the best of the best after the student has got a doctorate.

Mathematics professors all over the world will, supposedly, make efforts to become a foundation professor, for "one must spend some time in the course of your life in Bonn," said Professor Korte.

The library alone is regarded as the most important of its kind in the world.

In America research colleges of this kind are not out of the ordinary. Last year alone 12 were founded, one of them in discrete mathematics.

The Americans succinctly call their "think tanks" centres of excellence, an expression, however, Professor Korte avoids. He said "there are bad associations with the expression."

In fact highly talented people do not have an easy time in the Federal Republic: little is done for the élite and their needs.

Professor Korte regrets this deeply. He is a passionate supporter of promoting the highly-gifted. He himself had a grant from the "People's Study Foundation" in Bonn.

He said: "Research pushes one's abilities to the limits as in sport and art. Everyone has to accept that he or she cannot play tennis like Steffi Graf or football like Maradonna. But one is not permitted to talk about this as regards the intellect."

Universities neglect competition, intellectual clashes, he said. Professor Korte wants to motivate students more to make research more attractive — through more competition.

"No 100-metre runner can compete only twice a year. How does he know how he is doing?" he said. But he warned that care must be taken to ensure that mental tension was not caused.

This is why he applies quite different criteria to applicants for his research college. The applicant does not only have to be tremendously industrious and interested; he must have his own ideas. "Does he just copy or does he have his own style of handwriting?" Professor Korte asked.

The most important aspect is to be creative. The "trial run," which the Institute prescribed a year ago, showed just how difficult it is to meet Professor Korte's standards. From 30 excellent applicants for a post-doctorate grant only three were accepted, a Canadian, a Chinese and a Vietnamese.

The criteria applied to his assistants are just as tough. He has had to fill three new posts in discrete mathematics — but no-one knows when this will be done. Professor Korte has not found any qualified scientists. He said: "We can find the money but we can't find the people."

Discrete mathematics is too small and too new a discipline for there to be specialists at universities. Originally mathe-



matics were discrete — the Egyptians and Babylonians only calculated using discrete methods.

The word "discrete" stems from the Latin "discernere" and has two meanings. "Discreet" means "wary or prudent," while the word "discrete" means "separate, discontinuous, consisting of distinct parts."

Discrete mathematics is the mathematics of divisible, finite structures, while analysis is concerned with infinite structures and limits.

This is why discrete mathematics is so important, because every computer application is discrete; a computer does not recognise limits.

Enormous quantities of data, for example, can be deciphered by discrete mathematics: blurred signals from a Venus probe can be rectified and robots can be programmed to the best advant-



Crossing Königsberg bridges... Professor Korte. (Photo: Sachsse)

age. As a student Bernhard Korte solved his first discrete problem for the agricultural faculty of Bonn University.

He calculated how various varieties of fruit trees should be planted so that they pollinated one another to the best advantage. He was given a basket of apples as a fee.

Earlier discrete mathematics were dismissed as mathematics for pleasure. The Königsberg bridge problem is well known in this connection.

Bridges

In the 18th century the citizens of Königsberg asked themselves whether there was a route which led over the seven bridges over the River Pregel just once and returned the starting point without having to go along any one route twice.

After four years of calculations the mathematician Leonard Eurler solved the problem: there was no way.

Today discrete mathematics has lost some of its playful characteristics. Bernhard Korte's students need only two weeks to solve the kind of problem which Leonard Euler tackled.

For instance, if they are asked to design a microchip in which millions of dots have to be wired up with one another. They can find the most effective connections with discrete mathematics.

The mathematicians in Bonn have improved construction plans by 97 per cent. That saves time and money and machinery is used to the fullest extent of its capacities.

Computer producers IBM have recognised how important the students' work is and supports the seminar with DM25m.

If politicians use discrete mathematics then the Königsberg bridge problem emerges yet again.

They have calculations made on the most suitable route they should take during the election campaign — at the end of next year — so that a politician goes through a city only once and does not waste time and have to retrace his steps.

Chancellor Konrad Adenauer would have been delighted by such an exercise and Professor Korte has a special relationship to the Chancellor.

He is the tenant of the former CDU central party offices. Professor Korte has placed his desk in exactly the position of that of Adenauer.

Stefan Kornelius

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 19 August 1989)

Lufthansa

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to expand Cologne/Bonn to an interchange airport for Europe.

In the autumn planes from the North will be landing early morning at Cologne — there connections will begin to take off for southern Europe.

Towards evening Lufthansa planes will be returning in the reverse direction via Cologne.

But Lufthansa cannot just expand: it must also economise. After 1992 it will only be able to tackle the competition if costs are held in check.

So far Lufthansa has always been profitable — but there is room for tightening the belt.

However, there is no threat that personnel will be sacked or that the number of employed will be cut back, because sharp growth is expected in the immediate future. Every new jumbo in the fleet means 200 new jobs.

Nevertheless the airline will take a close look at personnel costs. This means that personnel working with DLT, in which Lufthansa recently acquired a majority holding, will not be paid at the same rates as Lufthansa personnel.

Air freight subsidiary, German Cargo System, and the charter company Condor, will be operated either with non-company personnel or with staff taken on at the general wage rate.

While Lufthansa is buying planes consideration is being given as to whether Condor jets should not be leased. Herr Menninger said: "Condor would again be more competitive if that was done."

In view of the increasing competition on the charter market Condor has been under pressure from considerable competition. To compensate for this consideration is being given to the possibility of Condor itself going into the travel agency business.

Airtours is among the companies which have made an offer to be a partner in such a development and the Stuttgart company, Hetzel. Herr Menninger said that no decision had yet been made, however.

Klaus Dieter Oehler

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 17 August 1989)

Book fair

Continued from page 10

Kongreß. Die Kette der Demütigungen for Matthes & Seitz.

Hermann Lenz has produced for the Eulen-Verlag the book of the TV production *Hohenlohe*.

Günter Kunert is publishing with Radius *Dichter predigen. Reden aus der Wirklichkeit*, a collection in which Peter Härtling, Jurek Becker, Wolfdietrich Schnurre and Erich Loest are represented.

Loest also appears in the Linden-Verlag's new publications list with his novel *Fallhöhe*.

Herta Müller and Eva Demski are in the Rotbuch publishing house list with *Reisende auf einem Bein* and at the Frankfurter Verlaganstalt with *Käferchen & Apfel.*, *Kleine Anleitung zum Lesen und Verschlingen*.

The cost of some books is staggering. Arno Schmidt's *Die Umsiedler. Alexander oder Was ist die Wahrheit?* from the Frankfurter Verlagsanstalt costs DM168, and the same author's rare publication *Eberhard Schlotter — Das zweite Programm* from Haffman will cost around 100 marks.

W. Christian Schmitt

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 18 August 1989)

■ THE ENVIRONMENT

A tree gene bank to treat dying forests and maintain variety



Europe's first genetic research unit for trees is in Arnsberg, Westphalia. It contains a forestry gene bank where tree seed from all over North Rhine-Westphalia is kept in cold storage at a temperature of -20° C, or 0° F.

The plain metal shelves, still half empty, are where tree seed — hand-picked, weighed and carefully labelled — *hibernates in plastic bags, dark jars* or sacks.

The building looks more like an outsized detached house than an ecological storage facility.

Laboratories and offices surround the chillrooms on the ground floor, where security — and safety precautions — are as strict as at a nuclear power station.

The concrete containing walls are 30cm (one foot) thick. If a plane were to crash, scoring a direct hit these walls, would absorb the impact without even shaking, it is claimed.

They are clad in sheet lead to keep out nuclear radiation. Emergency generators are at the ready to keep the seed chilled in the event of a power cut.

The expense of these arrangements is out of all proportion to the contents of the refrigerated chambers, especially as not all the shock-frosted seed is kept on deposit, as it were; much is held in a current account for day-to-day use.

Fears for the future of the forests, which largely depends on their condition here and now, is very much apparent here in Arnsberg, as is a ready supply of funds.



A seed in a plastic bag is worth ... tree institute's Schmitt and sample.

The Arnsberg gene bank would probably not have been built if *Waldsterben*, the phenomenon known in German as "forest death," had not shattered the belief in harmony between industry and nature.

"The idea of the gene bank is intended to ensure the continued existence of the forest, and our work is aimed mainly at ensuring its continued variety," says Heinz-Peter Schmitt, a senior forestry officer attached to the unit.

The part played in offsetting "forest death" by storing seed must not, he adds, be overestimated.

Modern large-scale atmospheric pollution may pose a threat to large areas of woodland; but a much wider range of factors is to blame for the genetic pauperisation of the forest. "The destruction of forest land to about two thirds of its original area has led to the extinction of varieties and of the genetic information they relayed."

In other words, giving preference to some kinds of tree and neglecting others is one of a number of ways in which to deplete the forest.

It has certainly led to a decline in the number of species that are still alive to tell the tale.

Some trees, such as the aspen, the willow and the alder, are "pioneer" trees. To neglect them for the sake of fast-growing, quick-yield trees is a sin against our "green lung."

To plant conifers on a large scale — rather than deciduous trees — is, in the long run, to the detriment of the forest as a whole.

The Arnsberg foresters make it clear that they cannot make an indefinite contribution toward reafforestation. The most serious problem Herr Schmitt and his associates face is that shock-frosted seed does not keep indefinitely.

It grows infertile as time goes by. The seed of deciduous trees, for instance, does not keep for anywhere near as long as that of conifers. Beechnuts can be kept for about three years, acorns for a mere 18 months. Alder, ash, birch, linden and maple seed can be kept in cold storage for about a decade. Experiments in progress are aimed at making deciduous seed last longer. In Lower Saxony liquid nitrogen is being tested. Beechnuts are temporarily deep-frozen to -195° C in a bid to make them keep for longer. Herr Schmitt reaches into a jute sack with both hands and lets the seed trickle between his outspread fingers.

In the laboratories seed and seedlings are stacked so densely that they overflow into the corridors, giving off an intensive smell of hay.

Processing and storing seed is only part of the trouble and expense, he says, fetching a small plastic bag from the other chillroom.

"This one-kilo bag of Douglas fir seed from tested stock costs us about DM2,500," he says — and that is only the cost of coming by it in the first place.

The chief expense is seed-pickers' wages.

A group of pickers is at work in a copse near Welver, about 20 miles away. Ingo Hamm has taken off his climbing gear and just taken his midday break.

All that can be seen or heard of his workmate and fellow-forester Erik Lagast is a rustling high up overhead. He is cramponned way up an 80-year-old wild cherry tree, collecting ripe cherries for their kernels. Every so often he shouts a word of warning, then a branch or two comes crashing down. Their instructions are to pick one kilogram of cherries per tree, but that isn't always possible. Birds get there first. The birds are very fond of rich, ripe, dark red cherries — and they are the ones the pickers are most interested in. Forestry inspector Jürgen Blecher marks trees ready for harvesting with a blob of red paint. "These cherry trees," he says, "are probably a local variety that have grown here for ages and evolved here." Stock that is classified as valuable has developed genetic programmes of its own over the centuries and millennia, programmes that have proved their worth in a variety of historical eco-conditions.



Seed pickers are sometimes in competition with the birds.

(Photos: Klaus Görgen)

Unlike trees grown from seedlings in a jam jar, they can adapt to changes in their living conditions. The more varied this genetic programme is, the less sensitive they are to natural stress.

Erik Lagast slowly appears, making his way back down the tree with a bucket half full of small, blood-red cherries.

Ingo Hamm straps himself back into his gear and crampons up the first 10 metres (33ft) or so of branchless tree trunk.

He then changes from his first set of sickle-shaped crampons to a more conventional set.

Given the present storage facilities for wild cherries, the day's pick should be enough to last for between six and eight years as a genetic reserve.

There are limits to the quantities that can be collected. In 1987 700kg of beechnuts were collected. Last year it was 1.8 tons of acorns.

These quantities are a poor guide to shelf life and storage capacity. One kilogram of spruce seed is enough for about 80,000 seedlings; whereas one kilogram of acorns is only enough for about 200 oak seedlings.

From time to time past crops have to be sown when their shelf life runs out.

Thousands of seedlings grow row by row in the nursery. They grow in the open, but protected on all sides by tall trees from bad weather.

A row of beech seedlings is remarkable in that the seedlings already bear fruit even though they are still only nursery plants. Grafting is the secret of their early development.

In reality these mini-plants are 160 years old: cuttings taken for grafting from the tops of badly damaged beeches near Paderborn.

Grafted onto suitable host trunks, they are busily bearing fruit — and seed — to ensure the survival of their species.

Next to the beeches young yew trees from Bad Münstereifel have been rescued for a future that will hopefully include trees.

Before the year's end the Arnsberg gene bank plans to go in for tissue culture technology. It involves growing seedlings from sections of tissue taken from specially prepared sprig-tips, using growing powder.

Tissue culture technology and microvegetative reproduction, developed in the early 1980s, stepped up the pace of reproduction alarmingly — and not without a degree of risk.

Herr Schmitt concedes that every step in the direction of genetic engineering entails a risk of manipulation.

"Initial consideration is being given by a government working party," he says, "to abuse of these new techniques."

Yet despite their hard work *and their* successes Herr Schmitt and *his staff of* eight still face an abundance *of unsolved* problem.

They lack essential basic research know-how on, say, forest damage.

Strange though it may sound, research scientists are still unable to define what makes a healthy tree healthy.

Wildly contradictory findings have been submitted on the germination capability of seed from damaged trees. Checking the antecedents of individual trees poses serious problems too.

"We can't say for sure whether a tree has always grown here, was imported or has migrated, as it were," says Herr Schmitt.

He hopes modern laboratory techniques will make clearer findings possible, such as "genetic fingerprinting" of individual trees for identification purposes.

Yet he and his associates agree that clean air is the only really effective means of preventing "forest death" — no matter how much effort they and others put in.

No-one in Arnsberg harbours any illusions that their seed bunker might be a Noah's ark in which the forest can be saved for posterity before it is choked to death by environmental pollution.

Klaus Goergen

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 19 August 1989)

■ HEALTH

Away from traditional medicines: trend towards homoeopathic treatments

Frankfurter Rundschau

What do a medical student gathering herbs in the Andes, a plain-clothes policeman who studies acupuncture in his spare time and a pensioner who makes antiseptic ointment from calendula flowers she picks herself have in common?

They are all sceptical about classical medicine and keen believers in nature cures.

In the wake of catalytic converters for vehicle emission and phosphate-free detergents, a growing number of Germans are interested in keeping their body intake of chemicals and toxins to a minimum.

They have discovered the human body as an eco-system in need of protection. Much to the chagrin of the pharmaceutical industry, nature cures are on the crest of an unprecedented wave.

"People come to my practice with carrier bags full of medicines they no longer want to take," says Eugen Hohmann, who has practised as a homoeopath in Sachsenhausen, Frankfurt, for 22 years.

"The aversion to chemicals has definitely increased," agrees Helmuth Dippner of the Hesse Medical Association. Among doctors and patients alike, he feels, the trend is clearly toward naturopathy.

Of the 800 doctors in general practice in Frankfurt, 122 have already gained extra qualifications in naturopathy and 23 in homoeopathy.

"Similia similibus curentur" (may like be cured by like) is the basic tenet of homoeopathy, as devised by Samuel Hahnemann, 1755-1843, a German doctor.

Animal, vegetable and mineral substances are ground, diluted and shaken. These potencies, a term denoting the degree of dilution, are said to redress the metabolic imbalance that is to blame for the complaint.

Homoeopathic medicines are aimed not against the disease but at activating the self-healing powers of the patient's body.

That is why they are said to have few if any side-effects, unlike conventional medicinal herbs, some of which can be lethal.

There are times when a handful of tiny droplets is all that is needed. When Georg K., 42, first consulted Klaus Wersche, a general practitioner and homoeopath, he had misgivings.

"I couldn't believe it worked," he says. Wersche, trained as a "perfectly ordinary schools medic" but with additional qualifications in a variety of naturopathic techniques, first bombarded him with questions.

What was his favourite food? How did he lie in bed when he was asleep? Did he suffer from cold hands or feet? The consultation took two hours.

Then he was prescribed a medicine by the name of Mhedorinum 200. "The amazing thing," Georg K. says, "is that my tiresome skin itch has since stopped."

Tonio, three months old, was suffering from a cough that threatened to choke him to death, the symptom of a serious complaint known as pseudo-Krupp. He too was cured.

When his condition deteriorated and even cortisone jabs failed to have the desired effect his despairing parents decided to give the naturopath a try before having their son hospitalised.

The naturopath they consulted prescribed a course of drops in different colours that Tonio had to take in a certain order, plus a low-sugar diet with plenty of roughage.

"We saw for ourselves how Tonio's condition improved daily," his parents say.

"It works really well with children," Wersche says. Courses of homoeopathic treatment have even worked well on dogs.

Why and how they work is another matter. No-one really knows. And much the same is true of other nature cures.

Leeches have been shown to ease the pain of patients with arthritic hips. Patients who used to have regular bouts of bronchitis, say three times a year, need in all probability never suffer from bronchitis again — if they keep up Pastor Kneipp's water cure treatment.

Leading naturopaths are not alone in feeling it is high time we found out how empirical medicine works. So does Federal Research Minister Heinz Riesenhuber.

But, as a Ministry spokesman puts it, it is far from easy to come by research projects that can be taken seriously.

Scientific methods may simply be inadequate to come to terms with the complex interplay of body, soul and spirit on which naturopathy, with its holistic approach to medicine, is based.

An aromatic cup of herbal tea attractively served is balm for the soul, says Dr Malte Bühring of Frankfurt University Hospital, who has just been appointed to Germany's first academic chair of naturopathy, in Berlin.

The doctor consulted can similarly be as effective as the drugs he prescribes — if only the patient can sense that his doctor is listening to him, taking him seriously and seeing him in the whole and not just his ulcer.

Sensations can thus be medicine. A sick person does not resemble a motorcar that merely needs a faulty part replacing.

Advocates of holistic medicine see the complaint as not just an upset to be remedied but a signal, a challenge, a warning to the patient to live on better terms with himself and with nature.

Many people who have gone in for nature cures change their eating habits, get more exercise and feel personally responsible for their health.

Or so says a pharmacist in Seckbach, near Frankfurt, who has spent years looking into the various sectors of empirical medicine.

The nature cure outlook can cut costs, as Labour Ministry officials in Bonn have not been slow to notice.

The health service reforms packaged by Labour Minister Norbert Blüm virtually equate phytotherapeutic (plant-based) and homoeopathic medicines with pharmaceuticals — provided they work.

"If they are equally effective they must be given the same legal treatment," says a Ministry spokesman.

The health insurance schemes differ in their approach. One leading private insurer, unlike most, paid medical bills for acupuncture and homoeopathic treatment even before Herr Blüm's health service reform.

"We regularly get letters from members who tell us they have been cured by inexpensive means after years of hospital treatment to no effect," says a spokesman for the scheme.

But his insurance does not refund expenses for the more controversial courses of treatment. There is certainly no shortage of treatments from which to choose. Bloodletting and reflex zone massage are but two that come to mind.

The range is confusing for the layman. So is the sheer number of naturopaths who practice medicine, always a lucrative profession.

Even convinced naturopaths warn of quacks and charlatans, but conventional medics can also be a disappointment.

The two schools of thought, conventional and holistic medicine, are still waging a war of attrition, with the one dismissing the other as quacks and allegations of narrow-minded idiocy and arrogance being made in the other direction.

But there are signs of a rapprochement. In conventional medicine a growing number of doctors are keen to rely less on medical apparatus and pay more attention to psychology and empathy than to high tech.

On the other side of the ideological fence a growing number of naturopaths are trained in conventional medicine, like Klaus Wersche.

Naturopathy may still be looked at askance at most medical faculties, but in practice the two lines of approach have long been jointly pursued.

Friederike Tinnappel

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 20 August 1989)

Continued from page 9

be higher than those paid by their main competitors in non-Community countries.

Yet the BDI also calls for a uniform European Community approach on limiting atmospheric, water and soil pollution caused by energy consumption.

The Trades Union Confederation (DGB) agrees on the need to reduce emission but feels the emphasis must be on rationalising energy use, such as by recycling process heat, and on developing regenerative energy alternatives.

The DGB deals at length with the long-term hazard posed by radioactive waste from nuclear power stations. The DLR and the Rhenish-Westphalian Economic Research Institute (RWI) are also strongly in favour of concentrating on energy-saving and renewable energy alternatives.

The RWI says energy imports, especially of coal and nuclear fuel, would be sure to increase, partly in place of oil and natural gas, even if conventional energy consumption were to be stabilised.

On cost grounds there seem sure to be further drastic cutbacks in coal production in the European Community.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 21 August 1989)

■ HORIZONS

East is east and west is... and marital twains can hit the odd impediment

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Seventy five per cent of Germans don't like the idea of a woman marrying a foreigner, according to a survey by a media company. Yet 15 million people in Europe are members of international families.

Since 1945, about 500,000 German women and 200,000 German men have married foreigners. For the men, the amount of discrimination is far less than for the women. It goes even further. According to the survey, men are even envied by other men because of their "exotic" partner.

There have always been comings and goings into Germany and out of it for political, economic reasons or because of war. In the 15th century, there were the Dutch, who came as religious refugees. They were quickly followed by Hugenots from France.

In 1871, there were about 207,000 foreigners living and working in Germany; by 1910 there were more than a million. Between 1821 and 1932, 60 million people emigrated from European countries. In 1983, 20,000 Germans were looking for new homes in America, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Argentina and Brazil.

In every culture there is a certain prejudice against foreigners. Every people has a certain way of living, certain roles and symbols, an identity and values and a certain way of looking at the world.

Well-meant warnings from friends are relatives against a person marrying someone from another cultural background are not entirely without basis because such marriages place high demands on both partners. They need to change their mode of living.

Anyone entering a long-term relationship with someone from another background cannot simply ignore the cultural difference. A compromise must be arranged.

Common bones of contention include stress on the woman because of the demands made on her by the family of her foreign husband. Sometimes, the family comes to visit too often and, when they do come, they stay far too long.

Dissent can arise in simple things: the husband might make long — and costly — telephone calls to his own country. He might send what she regards as an excessive amount of his earnings back home.

When they visit his relatives, his behaviour might alter. For example, whereas at home in Germany, he might help with the housework, when he is with his relatives he might not want to be seen doing things which are normally only done by women.

Many women go into a marriage with a Muslim man without knowing that any children born to them are automatically regarded as Muslim because the father is Muslim.

As a rule, Muslim states don't allow rights of inheritance to people who aren't Muslims. That means that a German woman must become a Muslim if she wants to inherit anything from her husband.

Circumcision of boys, provided for in Islamic law, can also cause problems.

The concern works on both sides of the cultural divide: parents in other cultures as a rule don't like their son or daughter marrying an outsider. Parents in all countries seem to assume from experience that it is easier and happier for children to remain within the tribe.

Here in Germany, serious family conflicts are often referred to lawyers, advice centres or even the police. Such social controls are not viable alternatives in some countries.

Instead, this regulating is done by parents themselves, the wider family or even by neighbours.

Then there is the clash of the two cultures: the "us society" and the "me society." Most people from non-European countries grow up in a "us society." That means a large family unit with a strongly hierarchical structure. Everybody is for everybody else. A person alone is nothing.

Communal decisions are made and respected. Children are raised to maintain family solidarity and demote personal wishes. The son takes care of the parents. The elder brother decides for the younger.

In the "me society," the small family rules and relatives play a smaller role. The main aim is for children to grow up to be able to stand on their own two feet and to develop their talents. "Everyone for himself and God for us all," is one way it has been expressed.

Both partners in a mixed marriage must, therefore, learn that different things are meant when they each talk of "the family."

Another cause of dispute is often over the function and the substance of the marriage. Most Germans regard marriage as being a result of "romantic love." The most important facets of such a relationship are: an honest relationship, the capacity to talk about things together, spending leisure hours doing the same thing together, having the same friends, sharing the business of bringing up the children and overcoming all problems together, sharing the housework and forming a protective unit.

Elsewhere marriages serve other purposes. In some places they are arranged. Love is not regarded as a main reason for such a marriage. Attempts by the woman towards self-fulfilment are regarded as egoistic and inconsiderate — and that means are regarded as being hostile to the family. One Arab woman, when asked how she was able to tolerate an arranged marriage, answered: "In your world, you choose your own partner yourself and, after marriage, love remains or it disappears. With us, the partner is chosen and afterwards, love comes or it doesn't. I ask myself: in the end, what is the difference?"

A successful arrangement between two people from different cultures can run into problems when children arrive. Questions such as what their religion will be, over who will have custody in the event of separation and one party returns to the land of origin and questions about ownership of property ought to be talked about right at the beginning.

In most Islamic countries, property is separated along laid-out lines. Women can claim gifts made to her after marriage. That is her security if the marriage breaks up because she has no right to maintenance support afterwards. If the couple decide to settle outside Germany it is sometimes best for a marriage contract to be drawn up specifiiying such things as, for example: the right of a woman to leave the country when she wants to; that the marriage should remain monogamous; that she can work if she wants to; and that her German pension can be paid out to her there.

Every culture, every nation, and sometimes even religious or ethnic minorities within a nation have their own legal systems. That means that if an international marriage runs into problems, factors such as separation, divorce, custody of children come up not only against cultural differences but also against legal ones.

At separation, children are sometimes used, regardless of any religious or cultural background, to get one over on the partner. Iranian philosopher Khalil Gibran once made a pertinent comment: "Your children are not your property. They are sons and daughters of the desire to find life for themselves."

International parents should learn that the native country of the partner can also be a home for the children.

Helga Friedenberg

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 20 August 1989)

A year after air disaster, the suffering continues

It is almost a year since the disaster at Ramstein, an American airbase in south Germany, in which three jets belonging to an Italian aerobatic team collided and crashed. Seventy people were killed and 450 injured.

Among the spectators at Ramstein that fateful day, 28 August 1988, was the Brejcha family. Father and mother and two children, Boris, now seven, and sister Ramona, now nine.

Both children were badly burned and spent many months in hospital. Mother and father were only lightly injured.

The children are, like other survivors, having to struggle with the mental and physical consequences of that weekend.

Matthias Giese is a 26-year-old fitter who suffered burns to more than 50 per cent of his body. He does not want to churn himself up inside by constantly recollecting the day. He spent more than six months in a hospital bed and now he attends a rehabilitation centre. He can no longer work at his trade.

The psychological dimensions of the tragedy can be seen: the Brejcha children, otherwise lively, are full of fear at night. They cry and wet their beds, says their father. Thunderstorms disturb them immensely. Herr Brejcha looks at their disfiguring wounds and fears that their greatest problems lie ahead in puberty.

Pain is also suffered by relatives of the victims. Marlies Witt's son Mario, who would have been 17 on 3 August, went to the display with his uncle. After the catastrophe, the parents had to wait five days until the last of the bodies burned beyond recognition was finally identified as Mario's. A house key was found in his jeans pocket. It fitted the Witt's house.

Frau Witt says: "This month is especially bad." Her suffering is obvious. The family still cannot bring themselves to believe that Mario, an aircraft fanatic, is really dead. They are still waiting for a report with the official cause of death. Both parents plus their six-year-old son are being treated by a psychotherapist.

They are also involved in a court case because the compensation is not regarded as sufficient. The Ministry of the Interior says that 700 of the 1,350 compensation cases have been completed. A spokesman says that there are still some "tricky cases" yet to be finalised.

There is the separated mother who was financially dependent on her 23-year-old son, who died at Ramstein. She would like support from the authorities, but they say she has no claim. Another victim had been earning 1,500 marks a month and left behind five children from different unions. He was also in debt.

One victim not only was supporting his wife and two children but also was paying off debts accrued by his business. The ministry is reckoning on new hearings in these outstanding cases.

But material help alone is not enough. "No amount of money can bring back a loved one," says a psychosomatic doctor who has been helping people overcome psychological damage by encouraging them to talk about it.

A meeting is planned for the first anniversary of the catastrophe. The Witts will be there. They want to put pressure on for a ban to be put on all air shows and low-level flying: "The fate of our son should be spared other people."

Thomas Maier

(Allgemeine Zeitung, Mainz, 18 August 1989)

Ramstein, 28 August, 1988. (Photo: dpa)

■ FRONTIERS

The golden rule of the test pilot — do not make a mistake



The two propellers gently buzzed deceptively. The altitude meter was constantly at 500 metres and the needles in the other dials remained almost constant.

Casually Uli Schell took hold of the joystick. "And to end off a spin dive," he said dryly and in the same breath pulled the joystick towards him.

The small machine lurched upwards, pointing its nose into the blue sky. Slowly the plane spun towards the earth in a corkscrew-like pattern, faster and faster.

Outside the plane the earth and the sky whirled round and round. The altitude meter showed 300 metres, 200 metres, then the plane levelled off and the pilot was sitting in the two-man plane as if nothing had happened.

This was nothing for Schell. His face was expressionless. The dangerous spin was for him just routine. It was all part of the job: test pilot.

Schell is one of the 300 test pilots working in the Federal Republic who put private aircraft, hefty jumbos and fighters and bombers through their paces, flying them to their limits "and just a little beyond," as Peter Weger, 45, put it.

He is a fighter test pilot, a job which is surrounded by controversy due to previous flying accidents.

The relationship between aerobatics and test flying is close. Both get the very most from the planes. But test pilots put great importance on the fact that they do not over-estimate their own limits.

Jets are intentionally put in a dangerous position in the air and arduously manoeuvred out of a crash situation. Despite all their experience every test is for experienced pilots a thrill.

A test pilot gets into a plane and pushes it to extremes which later the ordinary flyer would never achieve, Schell said. It is an exclusive profession.

The main centre of modern test-flying is Britain, where there is an exclusive club, the Society of Experimental Test Pilots.

In the club the spirit of famous names from the past prevails, Charles A. Lindbergh or Jacquelin Cochran, the first woman in the world to fly at Mach 2, that is twice the speed of sound.

There are not many West Germans who are honorary members of this Society. One is Hans-Werner Lerche, 74, who has put his daredevil experiences as a test pilot during the war into a book.

In his book he said that "At Rechling there was on average a funeral every 14 days."

But Schell energetically shook his head at such a scenario. The cliché about the "daring young men in the flying machines" is no longer applicable.

Despite all the thrills test-flying is a "safer job." Schell said: "We are a new generation." He is 32. By comparison veteran Lerche would have had to chuck the job in at the same age.

Schell began in a small way, with model aeroplanes. Defending his former hobby from mockery he said: "That's the best schooling you can get because you can experiment as much as you like without having to ask officialdom anything and without risk. If a plane crashes it is just shattered in the worst cases, no more."

In the main physics does not take size into consideration: "what is good for a model plane is good for a jumbo."

There is nothing like soaring through the clouds in a small machine. Schell began flying at 19 in gliders and motorised gliders. For the past five years he has been testing such machines for a Bavarian manufacturer.

He said: "I have to check every machine before it is sold." It is a lot of routine work without anything sensational.

Half of his day Schell sits at his desk with a view of the asphalt runway. He has to fight with officials for flying certificates and deal with mountains of paperwork.

He regards this as being "purely an official" and takes delight in the other half of the day.

He is in the air for three hours every day. "Along with the classic tasks of the test pilot the best aspect of the job is making improvements to a prototype."

Schell, wearing a parachute harness and a crash helmet, got into the machine made of synthetic materials. Later businessmen or politicians in grey flannel suits would be sitting there, or flying trainees, with their instructor, getting through their first timid attempts to fly.

The test pilot puts himself and the plane into a dangerous situation for them, "otherwise no-one knows how to get out of a dangerous situation."

What does the plane do when it is pressed too far and goes into a spin? Schell simply tries out what his colleagues, the engineers, have thought up on the drawing-board.

He said that test flights were essential for aircraft production, "even when technicians say they can calculate or simulate everything. That's no good because there are too many unknown factors."

Are there unknown factors which worry Schell himself? "No," he replied without hesitation. "When the cockpit cover is slammed to, and the seat-belt has been snapped to, then I function like a machine."

He said that anxiety was irrational and one could not afford it in a job such as his.

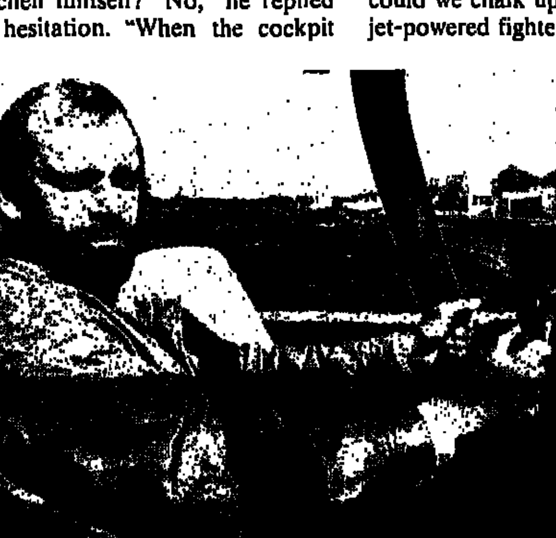
Test pilots were trained to assess risks correctly. "After all we are not beginners."

Schell clocks up 600 flying hours per year. He is very experienced. His previous training is also valuable: his qualifications include engineering studies, pilot training, practical flying and courses at the German research establishment for aviation and space technology. "Anyone who has been through all that gets a test licence." At this point the brotherhood of test pilots divides into two. These qualifications are not enough for being a test pilot for military planes. Training for testing military aircraft for deployment in combat is longer, more lavish and more expensive. They call themselves in English "Experimental Test Pilots" to separate themselves off with a touch of arrogance from the "amateurs and those after the war who were test pilots without having gone through all the training," said Peter Weger, a test pilot with an international arms group dealing with in lighter planes.

He has seven test pilots under him, that is half of the really serious test pilots in the Federal Republic, he said drily.

He regards "serious testing" as taking up military aircraft or jumbos. But in taking this attitude he does not intend in any way to belittle the other 250 test pilots in the civil sector. He said: "I am just emphasising the differences."

There certainly are differences. Weger and his colleagues all come from the armed forces. Weger said: "Where else could we chalk up 1,800 flying hours in jet-powered fighters?" They are a key to the profession. Today four basics are required: a course of technical studies, practical flying, a diploma from an internationally-recognised test pilot training school, of which there are only four in Europe, not one in the Federal Republic, and finally passing the tests of the regional aviation office. This is not inexpensive. Weger said that all together this cost DM1.3 million a year. It is fortunate when an employer or the state pays, the state via the armed forces.



Schell began with model aircraft. (Photos: PMI)

Richard Calwer said that most pilots were 35 before they had got through everything. Calwer is 44 and is one of the few who test military aircraft.

His curly hair is already steel-grey. He was 21 before he took to the air for the first time, and 35 before he got through the test pilots school. "At 55 everything is over," he said with a smile. Weger pointed to what is the schizophrenia of the job: "On the one hand a test pilot is more valuable the older he is and the more experience he has: on the other hand the profession calls for the fitness and good condition of youth."



Weger at the sharp end.

Test pilots have a thorough check-up once a year. Specialists put them through pressure chambers and place them in conditions where there is a lack of oxygen.

Weger said: "Physical fitness is a matter of life and death when you are alone up there."

But today test pilots are not alone when they put military aircraft or jumbos through their paces.

From the moment Weger crawls into the narrow cockpit in his orange-coloured overalls and puts on the oxygen mask he knows that every move he makes is being watched.

The key word in test flights is telemetry. Everything that happens during the test flight is automatically passed on to the ground station. More than 20 engineers sit before computers and monitors analysing the data.

After the test flight the computers know more than the test pilot in the air and they have become "the last court of appeal in aircraft design."

"Of course the computer cannot make decisions when we are in the skies," Richard Calwer said, underlining the limitations to the computer's abilities.

If he starts the jet so steeply that air no longer flows into the jets and the power gives out, no tips from control on the ground can help.

"Then suddenly it is very quiet up there and I know that within the next 20 seconds I have to do something otherwise the only thing left for me is to use the ejector-seat."

So far nothing has happened to him. "I've never had to bail out," he said proudly and crossed his fingers.

Weger has also never had to bail out. Like all his colleagues he has had drilled into him at the test pilots school the golden rule of the job: "We test pilots do not make mistakes."

Peter Schmidt

(Mannheimer Morgen, 17 August 1989)